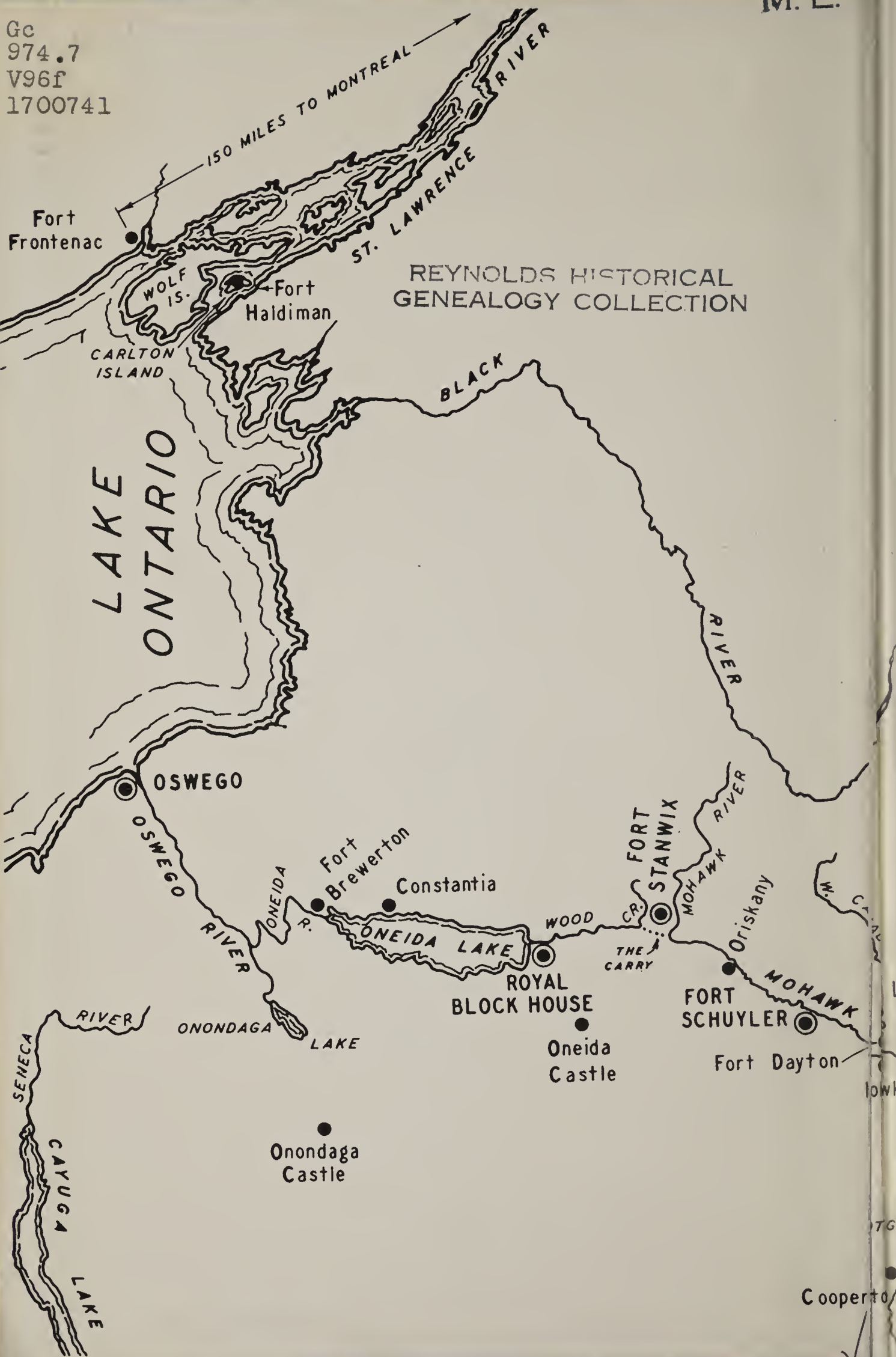


FORTS AND FIRESIDES
OF THE
MOHAWK COUNTRY

JOHN J. VROOMAN

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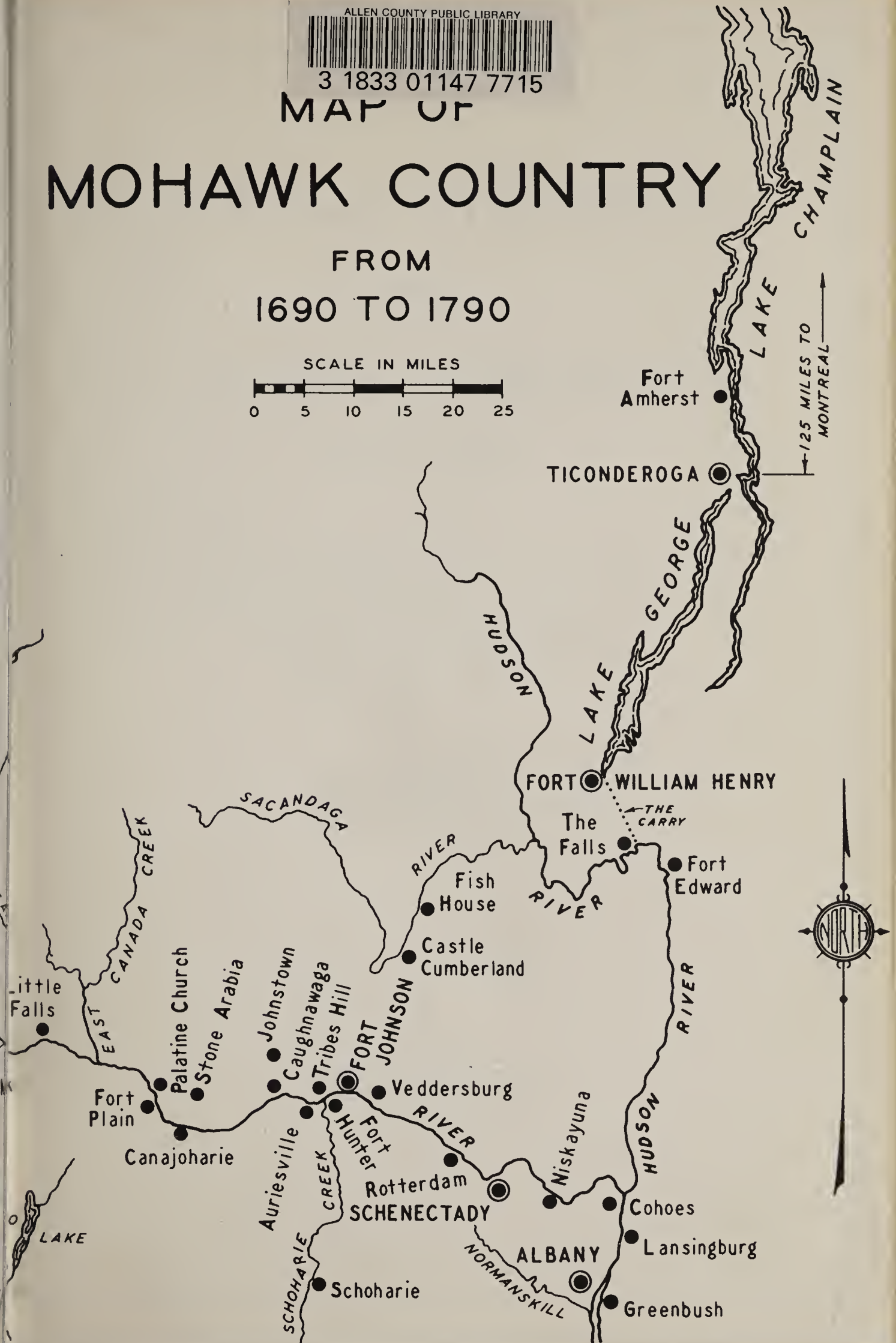
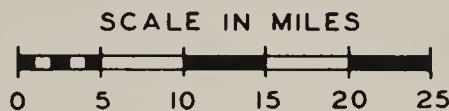
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MAP OF MOHAWK COUNTRY

FROM
1690 TO 1790



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FORTS *and* FIRESIDES *of the* MOHAWK COUNTRY NEW YORK

Stories and pictures of landmarks of the pre-Revolutionary
War period throughout the Mohawk Valley and
surrounding countryside including some
historical and genealogical mention
during the post-war period

By
JOHN J. VROOMAN

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1951

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by

John J. Vrooman
Schenectady, New York

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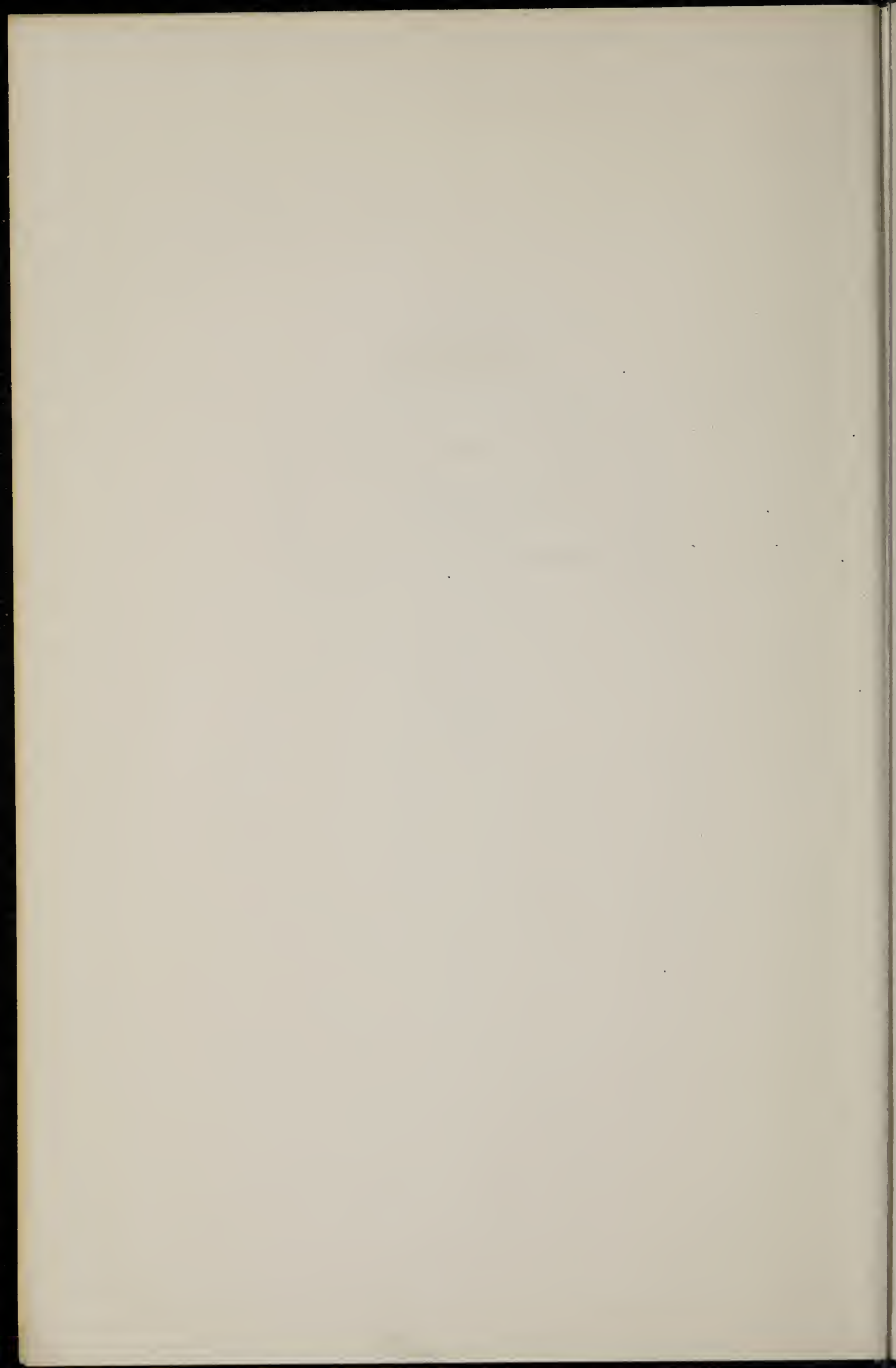
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To LOUISE



FOREWORD

The Mohawk Valley appeals to the artist because of scenery, to the farmer because of fertility, to the industrialist because of superior transport by rail and water. But the lover of history sees the Valley as a warpath toward destiny and a gateway to the West. No part of America is of more historical significance to more people than this water-level route from the Hudson to the Great Lakes and the Mississippi basin.

Nearly every old house in the Valley belongs to history. The past lives there vividly side by side with the present. It is nearly 280 years since Schenectady was founded, nearly 200 years since the French and Indian wars began there, and 120 years since the opening of the Erie Canal. Local historians have lovingly preserved both landmarks and legends through these centuries. The author, long known for both his photographic skill and his deep affection for his native region, joins a notable company of seers, interpreters and recorders whose works have made the Mohawk a name and a land beyond forgetting. I rejoice in the compilation of this heartfelt, imperishable record.

ARTHUR POUND,
State Historian.

March, 1943.

PREFACE

This book owes its origin to one sponsored by the Holland Society of New York, describing old homes of the Hudson Valley. My interest awakened, I sought in vain for a similar book which covered the Mohawk Valley, the territory in which as a life-long resident I am naturally more deeply interested.

Here then are the results of an effort to learn something of the buildings that remain to us of the pre-Revolutionary period throughout the Valley. It was necessary to accumulate information from many sources, and by piecing it together, bit by bit, make it into a fairly satisfactory whole.

There are other buildings in the Valley which by virtue of their age might well be recognized here, but I believe those have been included which possess the greatest interest or remain more nearly in their original state. And because of their importance to the history of the section the early forts which stood near the present city of Rome have been included, though little or nothing remains of them.

The territory encompassed extends westward beyond the confines of the Valley from Rome to Oswego, and on across what then was a stretch of wilderness, to Niagara. This was the continuous trail and waterway which served in time of peace or war and is therefore a part of the story. It has been thought necessary to include the Albany area as well, for its development was concurrent with that of Schenectady, these two settlements being at opposite ends of the long "carry" over which all commerce to and from the Valley passed.

The old buildings described are in various stages of repair or perhaps completely demolished and it is certain that as time passes all will become but a legend. No matter how well built, they must all succumb to time. I sincerely wish this were not true for there is an indescribable sensation, a mingled feeling of veneration and awe, and an appreciation of a privilege still ours,

to step into the very homes of the men whose names and fame are written into every book of the Valley. To our children or our children's children, this privilege will be lost as the houses pass away. It is hoped these pictures may help them to an understanding of what "used to be" long after the buildings are gone.

Much more might well be written of these and other houses and still other pictures might be included. But this book is not intended as a complete index of early structures, nor has it been prepared as a reference work. It is simply an offering, a contribution, and certainly a "labor of love."

THE AUTHOR

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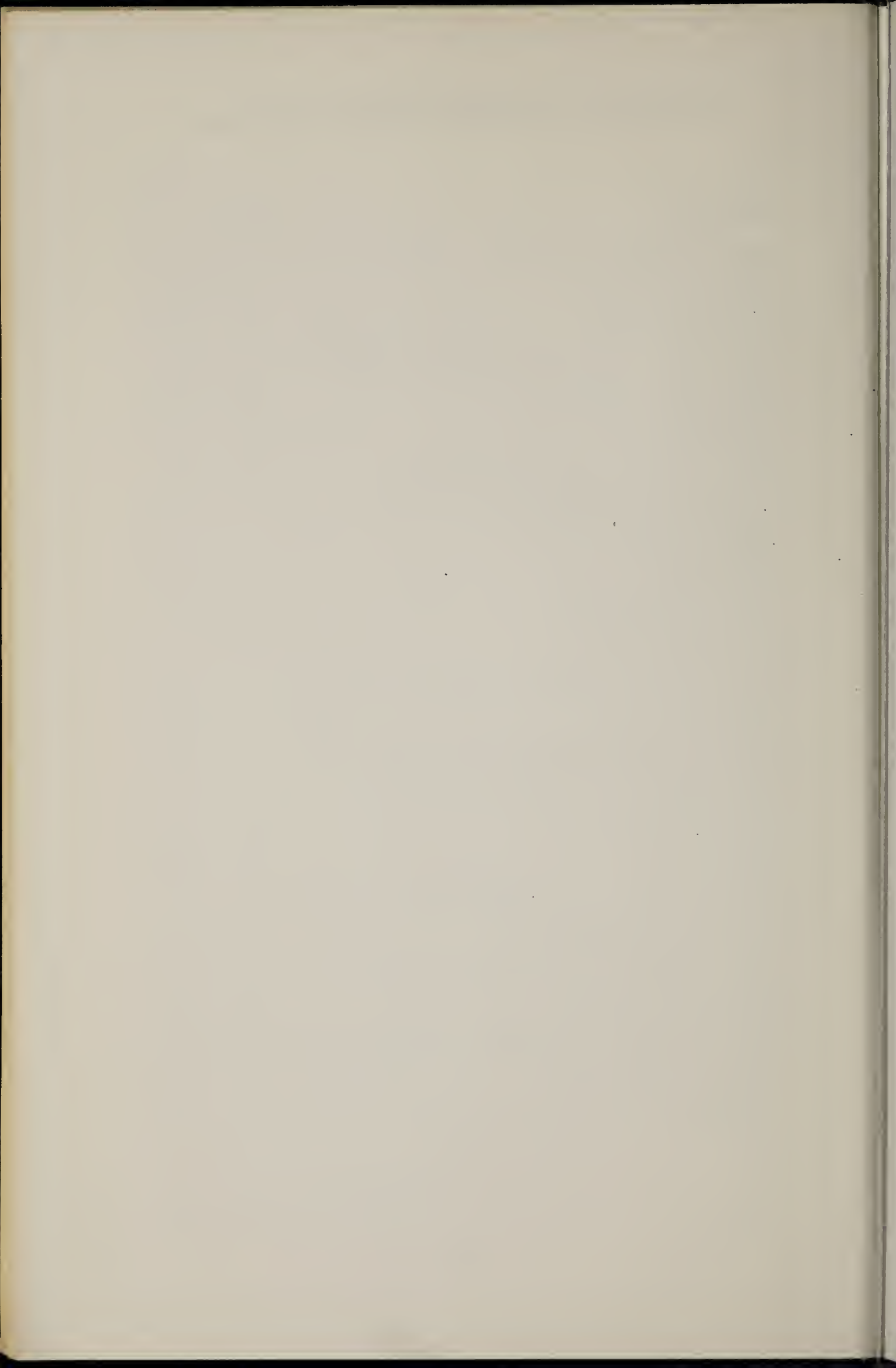
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AN APPRECIATION

* * * *

The author wishes to extend to Mr. E. E. Brownell, the publisher of the original edition, sincere thanks for his profound interest and cooperation. His affection for the Mohawk Valley led Mr. Brownell to forsake the commercial for the artistic in an effort to adequately present the subject matter;

To Dr. Dixon Ryan Fox (deceased), Ex-President of the New York State Historical Association, and to Dr. Arthur Pound, former State Historian, a deep debt of gratitude for continuing guidance and helpful suggestions throughout the preparation of the manuscript;

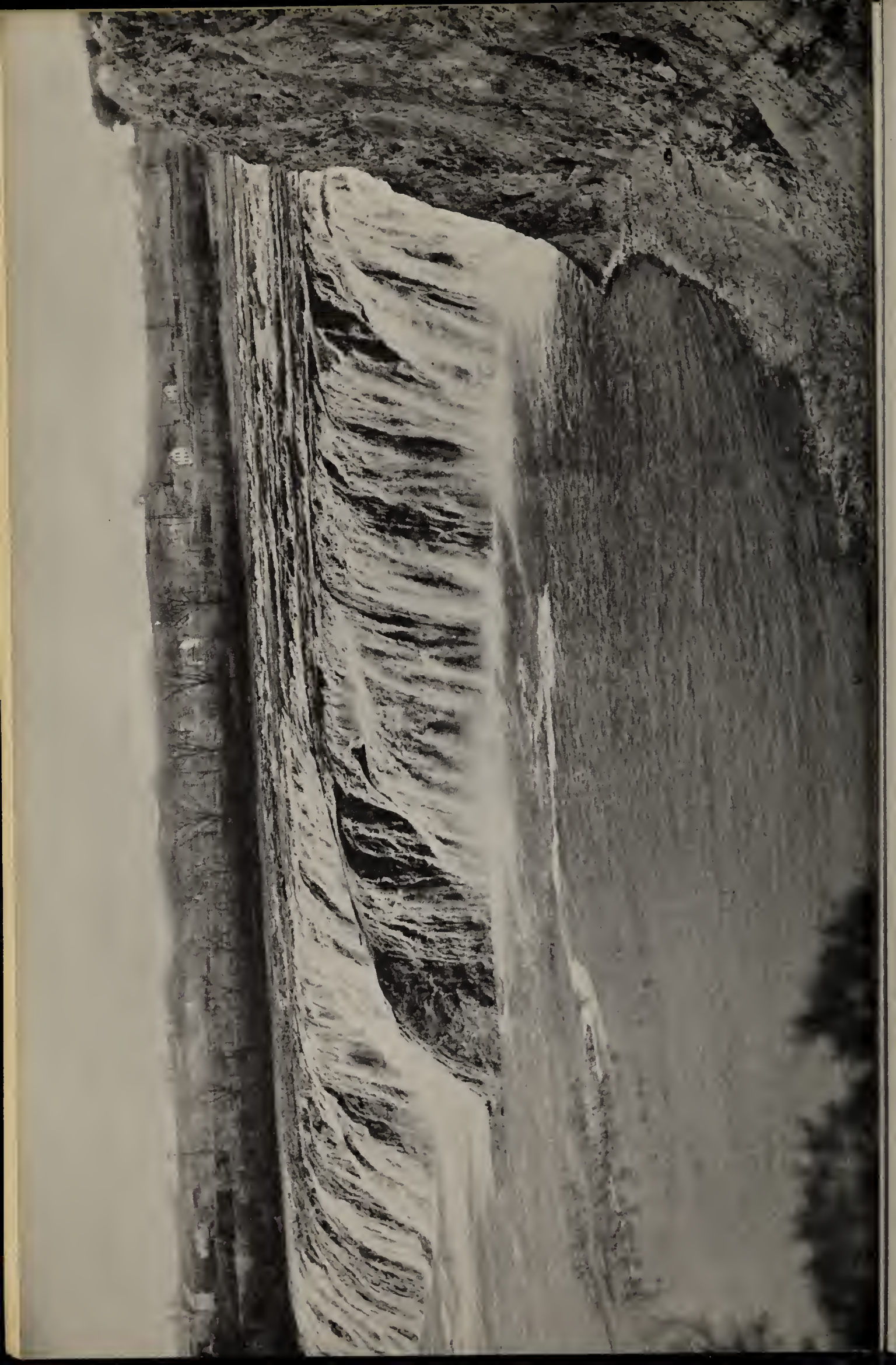
To Dr. W. N. P. Dailey, to Mr. Harry V. Bush (now deceased), and to Mr. Edward J. Sheehan, who shared their intimate knowledge of Mohawk Valley history in an effort to secure accuracy and authenticity;

To Mr. Charles H. Huntley (now deceased) and Mr. William S. Underhill, to Mrs. Marie Noll Cormack and Mrs. Ruth B. Groat for invaluable assistance with the many details of final preparation;

To Miss Marion P. Wiltsie, to Miss Juliet Wolohan and to many others of the New York State Library staff for their cooperation in making available much of the bibliography wherein research was made;

And finally to a host of interested Valley folk who have contributed family records and anecdotes which have added so materially to the value of the text.

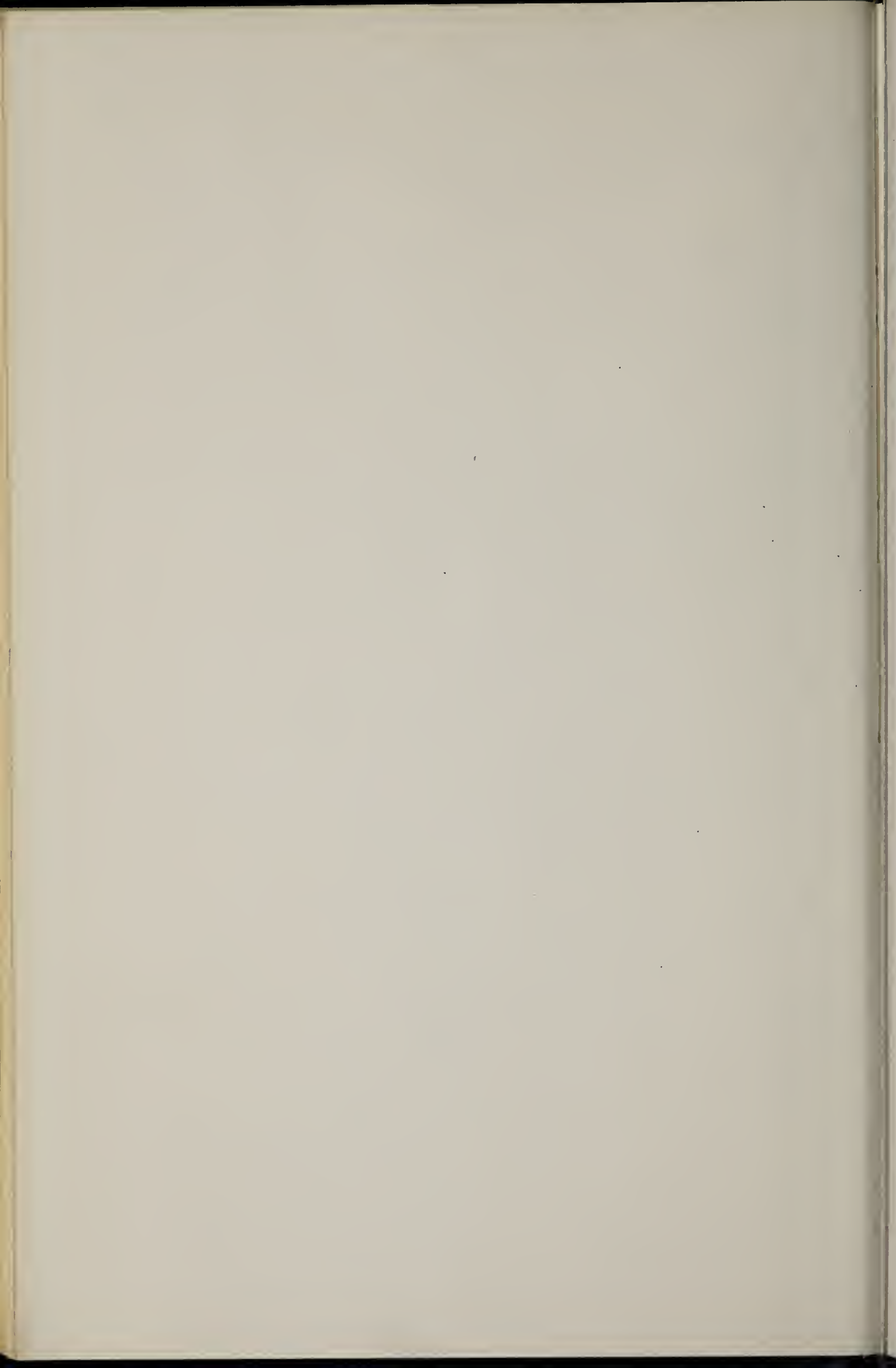
JOHN J. VROOMAN



TO THE FALLS OF THE MOHAWK

*"From rise of morn to set of sun,
I have seen the mighty Mohawk run;
And as I marked the woods of pine
Along his mirror darkly shine,
Like tall and gloomy forms that pass
Before the wizard's midnight glass;
And as I viewed the hurrying pace
With which he ran his turbid race,
Rushing, alike untired and wild,
Through shades that frowned and flowers that smiled,
Flying by every green recess
That woo'd him to its calm caress,
Yet, sometimes turning with the wind,
As if to leave one look behind!
Oh! I have thought, and thinking, sigh'd —
How like to thee, thou restless tide!
May be the lot, the life of him,
Who roams along thy water's brim!
Through what alternate shades of woe
And flowers of joy my path may go!
How many an humble, still retreat
May rise to court my weary feet,
While still pursuing, still unblest,
I wander on, nor dare to rest!
But, urgent as the doom that calls
Thy waters to its destined falls,
I see the world's bewildering force
Hurry my heart's devoted course
From lapse to lapse, till life be done,
And the last current cease to run!
Oh! may my falls be bright as thine!
May Heaven's forgiving rainbow shine
Upon the mist that circles me,
As soft as now it hangs o'er thee!"*

THOMAS MOORE at Cohoes, 1804



THE MOHAWK VALLEY



THE story of the Mohawk Valley would be without end if one were to tell it all; if, indeed, any individual were capable of telling it in all its ramifications. It is a story covering literally millions of years, as a great deal is known of the river and its tributaries from a time when its banks were covered with "tree ferns" some forty feet tall. These fossil remains are perhaps the oldest fossils in the world. Here too have been found the skeleton remains of mastodons, those prehistoric quadrupeds twice the size of an elephant. Examples of these are in the State Museum in Albany. Our interest in the Valley begins a few million years later when the Dutch began their settlements.

The very earliest dwellings built at Albany in 1614 have disappeared, for they were frail structures, hastily and poorly built. However there are several standing whose dates carry us well back into the early Dutch period. And naturally enough, as we progress through the years, we find an increasing number of buildings extant, as representatives of their particular period.

To appreciate these old structures one should know the circumstances under which they were built, the building material locally available, and the difficulties met with in importing material from abroad, not merely to our seacoast, but directly to the site of the home. Another interesting subject concerns the mechanics who did the building; also their tools and accessories. As conditions were constantly changing, roads being built, labor and supplies moving in more rapidly, it seems necessary to have a progressive history of the Valley before us as a measuring stick of development on which to "set" the buildings. So it might be well to skim over the story briefly.

When the Dutch arrived the occupants of the Valley were Mohawk Indians, who were one of a confederation of five tribes called the League of the Iroquois. Each tribe had its own defined territory. The Iroquois' effect on subsequent development was profound, for they presented a united front against the Canadian Indians (Hurons) and their allies, the French, who were bending every effort to colonize the entire region, from their established settlements along the St. Lawrence watershed.

The French had been avowed enemies of the Iroquois ever since Champlain killed some of their tribesmen at Ticonderoga in 1609.

The driving force behind this desire to colonize was not an unselfish desire on the part of the European nations to "Christianize" the savages, not a desire to gain territory, to seek gold and silver, or to produce crops. These things might come later; to begin with it was a desire to trade cheap trinkets, cloth, guns, ammunition and rum for beautiful furs at tremendous profits.

The ability to carry on this trade briskly, and in volume, was predicated upon a friendly relationship which must be maintained with the Indians as the source of supply. The traders themselves were too busily engaged "digging in" and establishing themselves to attempt the actual work of trapping. And so we find the Dutch making firm allies of the Iroquois Indians adjacent to them, just as the French were doing with their Indian neighbors farther north.

In considering the Mohawk Valley settlements, one is almost forced to include that part of the Hudson Valley from the point where the Mohawk enters it (at Cohoes) southward to what is now Albany, the location of the original settlement on the upper river. The early history of each section is closely correlated with the history of the other; as early as 1614 the Dutch made trips up the Mohawk from Albany in the interest of trade, urging Indians to bring in their pelts. The Albany area, largely because of its shipping facilities, became the headquarters of this fur trade. To the westward the limits were naturally more elastic, stretching farther and farther into the interior, ending, perhaps, at Niagara, for this was an important French trading post before 1726. The Dutch and English were forced to subdue this post to assure an uninterrupted, uncontested flow of these rich furs through eager hands down the Mohawk to Schenectady and across the sixteen-mile "carry" to Albany. As time passed the entire area of the Great Lakes basin, even beyond Niagara, fed this trade.

In 1617, after floods had swept the first Dutch settlements from Castle Island, located just below what is now Albany, a new settlement was begun at Fort Nassau, a little farther down the Hudson at the mouth of a stream called "Tawasentha," made

famous by Longfellow in his poem "Hiawatha." Of these early settlements no buildings remain.

By 1652 New York had become a city with a population of 800; an additional 500 were in the Albany district, and another 600 to 700 scattered along the river settlements between these limits. There were no settlements along the Mohawk at this time.

One of the earliest and most important of the Dutch manor estates was Rensselaerwyck, owned by the patroon Killiaen Van Rensselaer of Amsterdam, Holland. It consisted of some 700,000 acres and comprised what are roughly the present counties of Rensselaer and Albany. Here remains one of the very oldest houses in the State, known as "Fort Crailo," built about 1642, rehabilitated and maintained by the State of New York as a museum.

The first home in the Mohawk Valley of which there is definite record was that built by Alexander Glen opposite Schenectady in 1658. Three years later, in 1661, the settlement of Schenectady was begun. Glen's first home was too close to the river bank, where erosion of the stream constantly threatened it, so the house was taken down and reconstructed in 1713 at the top of the grade close by, where it stands today.

In 1664 the English took New Amsterdam from the Dutch and the Colony came under English rule. The English did little to colonize the land and the up country continued substantially Dutch in character for another hundred years, by which time English, Irish, and Scotch settlers had begun to drift in. Some of them secured immense Crown grants of land and encouraged colonization by their own kind. These large tracts of land were first bought from the Indians at a ridiculously low figure and later recognized by a Crown patent.

King William's War (1688-1697) quite effectively halted further settlement of the Mohawk Valley following several attacks. First came the burning of Schenectady in 1690 by a force of French and Indians from Canada. Two other attacks were made in 1693, the last one directed against the Mohawk Indian "Castles" or fortified villages. This latter raid was so destructive that three of the Mohawk clans, each heretofore having its own village, combined to form one castle at Tribes

An interesting bit of information is the "census" of Schenectady Township, County of Albany, 1714:

Number of males over 60 years	-	-	-	12
" " " from 16-60	-	-	-	110
" " " under 16	-	-	-	154
" " females over 60	-	-	-	13
" " " from 16-60	-	-	-	107
" " " under 16	-	-	-	151
" " male slaves over 16	-	-	-	7
" " " " under 16	-	-	-	10
" " female " over 16	-	-	-	19
" " " " under 16	-	-	-	8

591

This gives a white population of 547 all told and a colored population of 44 approximately twenty-five years after the massacre, at which time the Village alone was credited with a population of 400. Memories of the lurid decade 1690-1700 were too bright to permit of growth.

In 1712 the Palatines, migrating from their Hudson Valley camps, attempted a settlement in the Schoharie Valley, but because of previously granted patents there they were forced to leave. In 1723 the Stone Arabia patent of 12,700 acres was granted to twenty-seven of these Palatine families who totaled 127 souls. The Burnetsfield patent was granted in 1725 to a second group of 92 persons. The land lay westerly from Little Falls a distance of twenty-four miles on both sides of the Mohawk. This latter tract is the area which has come to be known as the "German Flatts." By this time there was a fair road cut through from Schenectady to the mouth of the Schoharie at Fort Hunter and this was gradually extended westward to reach the new settlements. In 1725 the population of the Valley was 2000, exclusive of Indians, whose numbers waned as the whites increased.

King George's War broke out in 1744, bringing French and Indian raids through the years 1746-7-8, when a so-called peace was agreed upon. This lasted only until 1754, the date of the decisive French and Indian War which was inevitable. The stake was so great as to compel a show-down between France and England. It brought an end to colonization by the French in

North America. By now the man power of the colonies had increased remarkably. Colonial troops fought beside the English against the French and Indians, demonstrating time and again their bravery, and with their leaders an ability to cope with situations which, had it not been for their knowledge of local conditions and modes of warfare, might easily have been disastrous to the English arms. To one man more than any other is due the English victory. This man was William Johnson, later Sir William. This was largely the result of his powerful leadership over the Mohawk Indians who, throughout the war, remained steadfastly loyal. In 1755 he won the Battle of Lake George, when he turned back the powerful army of invasion under Baron Dieskau. His home at Fort Johnson (1749), Amsterdam, is now a period historic house. Part of old Fort George (Lake George) may still be seen as well as the earthworks of Fort Bull at Rome, and Fort Brewerton at the west end of Oneida Lake. The two last named were built in 1755. Nothing remains of the Royal Blockhouse at the east end of Oneida Lake, another of this same chain of forts built along the old war trail to prevent an invasion of the Mohawk Valley. Another contemporary fort must be mentioned, the one built by the English in 1727 at Oswego to protect the fur traders. Being very lightly garrisoned it fell into the hands of the French in 1756. The French promptly destroyed the stronghold and the little settlement surrounding it. Fort Ontario, a later structure than Fort Oswego, and located on the opposite bank of the river, was also destroyed. Fort Ontario was later rebuilt, not at all along original lines, and remains an interesting though comparatively recent fortification. Until recently it has been in use as an army post. While Oswego was, of course, lost to the English, the French seem to have gained little by its capture, for it was never occupied by them. Bradstreet's army debarked from here to capture the French Fort Frontenac (Kingston) in August, 1758. Fort Niagara still remained in the hands of the French until Johnson captured it in 1759. This citadel remains today one of the oldest, most historic and most interesting of all early American fortifications.

The principal engagements of the French and Indian War did not take place in the Mohawk Valley, but the Valley did

furnish a generous quota to the English army. In 1747 Schenectady was again to have been a target but escaped with minor losses in an outpost engagement at Beukendael. In the upper reaches of the Valley, the "German Flatts" were raided in 1757 and again in 1758. Forts Dayton and Herkimer (the latter on the south shore) were the outposts here, and to them the settlers flocked when invasion threatened. These two raids demolished nearly all the buildings in that vicinity. Of Fort Dayton (at Herkimer) nothing remains. The Fort Herkimer Church, which stood adjoining Fort Herkimer, is still in use as a house of worship. Fort Bull, already mentioned, was completely destroyed by the French and Indians in 1756 and the occupants were "put to the sword."

Except for the loss of Fort Frontenac and Fort Niagara, both of which were lightly garrisoned, the French had suffered little, but by 1760 there were 10,000 men encamped at Scotia (Schenectady) under General Amherst, ready for the march against the French stronghold of Montreal, via the old war trail up the Valley to Fort Stanwix, down Wood Creek, across Oneida Lake, and down the Oneida and Oswego rivers to Lake Ontario. What a task it must have been to move such a body of men across virgin country aided only by streams in which were rifts and rapids as well as waterfalls, such as the one at Little Falls and another on the Oswego River. Then too, Wood Creek was little more than a meadow brook, shallow and winding in its course across almost level country. And between these streams were difficult "carries" where the boats must be hauled out, carried around the obstruction and relaunched beyond. But it was accomplished — just as Bradstreet had accomplished it in 1758 in the expedition against Fort Frontenac and just as Prideaux and Johnson accomplished it in 1759 in the expedition against Niagara. Can a more historic trail be found? Even then it had been used by white men for nearly a century as a trade route. And so it was used again while there was a peaceful breathing spell of fourteen years.

This country, like a healthy young child, had reached its maturity, but its parent England did not realize this. Had England's colonial policies of that day been similar to those she pro-

fesses today, it is questionable if the War of the Revolution would have been fought.

When Sir William Johnson died in 1774, England lost a powerful influence. His son, Sir John, never measured up to his father, although it is true the Mohawk Indians remained loyal to him and to the Johnson name. Their fighting force moved to Canada to fight beside him in his coming raids on the Valley.

The War of Independence began with the Battle of Lexington in 1775. Sir John and his Tories surrendered without a battle at Johnstown to 3,000 men under General Schuyler in 1776. Sir John gave his parole to remain neutral. This he broke and fled to Canada that same year, many of his retainers going with him.

As in the French and Indian War, so it happened again that the greatest battles took place elsewhere than in the Valley. Nevertheless, the bloodiest battle of the Revolution occurred at Oriskany in 1777. It was fought by an army composed of British, Hessians and Canadians, supported by Sir John and his Mohawk Valley Tories and their Indian allies.

General Herkimer was in command of the Colonial troops composed almost entirely of Tryon County men. After a fearful five hours of hand-to-hand combat, the enemy retired to their positions before Fort Schuyler (Stanwix) and seventeen days later fell back to Oswego. The Fort was saved and the invasion via the old War Trail along the Mohawk to Schenectady definitely checked.

But there was no cessation of hostilities. The next year the settlements of Springfield, Andrustown and German Flatts were raided. Later in the same year Cherry Valley on the southern slope of the Mohawk was totally wiped out.

Retaliatory measures were taken in July of 1779. The Clinton-Sullivan expedition marched through the heart of the Indian country completely destroying entire villages, fields and orchards and doing untold damage. The Indians never recovered from this blow. Niagara was to have been taken by this same expeditionary force, and because it was not it continued a haven for Tories and Indians from the Valley; a hive from which they swarmed time after time to carry on their merciless raids.

The Indians were "savages" before this effective expedition; now their losses added immeasurably to their spirit of revenge! Sir John Johnson led the venomous, blood-thirsty lot against the settlements at Tribes Hill and Caughnawaga in May of 1780. Again, in October of that same year, with the famous Mohawk Chieftain Joseph Brant, they burned and pillaged the entire length of the Schoharie Valley settlements. Other disastrous raids followed in July and in October of 1781. In the October raid at Johnstown they were defeated but managed to cover their retreat through the Adirondacks. This was the last engagement of the war, and strangely enough was fought after the surrender of Cornwallis, which occurred on the 19th of October. It was during this retreat that Walter Butler, the famous (or infamous) Tory, was killed at a ford on West Canada Creek. In the eyes of the Valley folks, this was a belated act of justice.

It is not difficult to understand why, after a century of such raiding and burning, the homes of some ten thousand inhabitants were almost totally destroyed. The exceptions were the stone houses not so easily obliterated and the few frame houses which were the homes of Tory sympathizers. From Tribes Hill, just west of Amsterdam, easterly down the Valley toward Schenectady, the country was not subject to the Johnson raids and in this section instances of pre-Revolutionary structures are more numerous.



ST. PETER'S CHURCH



THE BRONCK HOUSES

WEST COXSACKIE

ALTHOUGH these houses are located twenty miles south of Albany at West Coxsackie, they are of interest in connection with the history of the Mohawk Valley, not only because they are typical early Dutch houses, but because of the fact that Arent Van Curler, so prominent in the history of the Mohawk, married at Albany in 1643 Antonia Slaghboom, the widow of Jonas Bronck and the mother of Peter Bronck.

The original Bronck settler was Jonas, born in Holland, who came with his family to America in 1639. In 1641 he bought land from the Indians along the Harlem River and there he died in 1643. The "Bronx" perpetuates his name. His son Peter moved to Albany as early as 1642 where he built a tavern in 1651. He later owned a brewery which he mortgaged to buy a tract of about 350 acres (on which the surviving houses described are located) from the Indians for the sum of 150 guilders, on January 13th, 1662. Having thus assured himself of his farm he sold

"his brewery and the dwelling house in front with the mill house and horse stable, together with the well and the lot attached lying in the said village of Beverwyck in breadth in front on the street three rods eight feet to the north of Reendert Philipsen (Coyn) length of eleven rods, eight feet which is a part of the patent by the Heer Director General and council of New Netherlands to him the grantor given of date the 25th of October A. D. 1653" (and other property).

He presumably moved to his farm at once. We are able to fix the date of the first house fairly accurately by a notice of his death entered in the books of the Albany Dutch Church in January 1669. This entry is to the effect that his widow settled for his pall with two skipples of wheat. The property has remained through the generations in the Bronck family.

In 1738 Leander, grandson of Peter, built a brick building alongside the original stone house. Both structures have the

characteristic steeply-pitched roof but the stone building with its brick rimmed loop holes and iron beam anchors is particularly interesting. The brick of the second house is laid in the wall in English bond and along the eaves in a succession of triangular patterns, to better withstand the weathering. The gable ends are reinforced with iron beam anchors. Both houses are maintained in excellent condition for the Greene County Historical Society and are open to the public. A member of the Bronck family deeded the property to the Society and created an endowment fund to care for it. They are located just west of the road and south of the east and west intersecting road at West Cossackie.

The Bronck family have long been prominent. John L. Bronck was recommended for a Major's commission in the Colonial Army; Leonard (Leendert) Bronck was a Second Lieutenant in a Company of which his brother Philip Bronck was Captain; Richard, another brother, served on his local Committee of Safety which was a branch of the Albany Committee of Safety and which operated throughout the period of the war.

The description of the land as it appears in the original deed from the Indians to Peter Bronck bounds the lands by the river on the east and the "Katskill" path on the west, and between a Kill (or creek) on the north and another Kill on the south, the latter being mentioned as the "Stonekill."

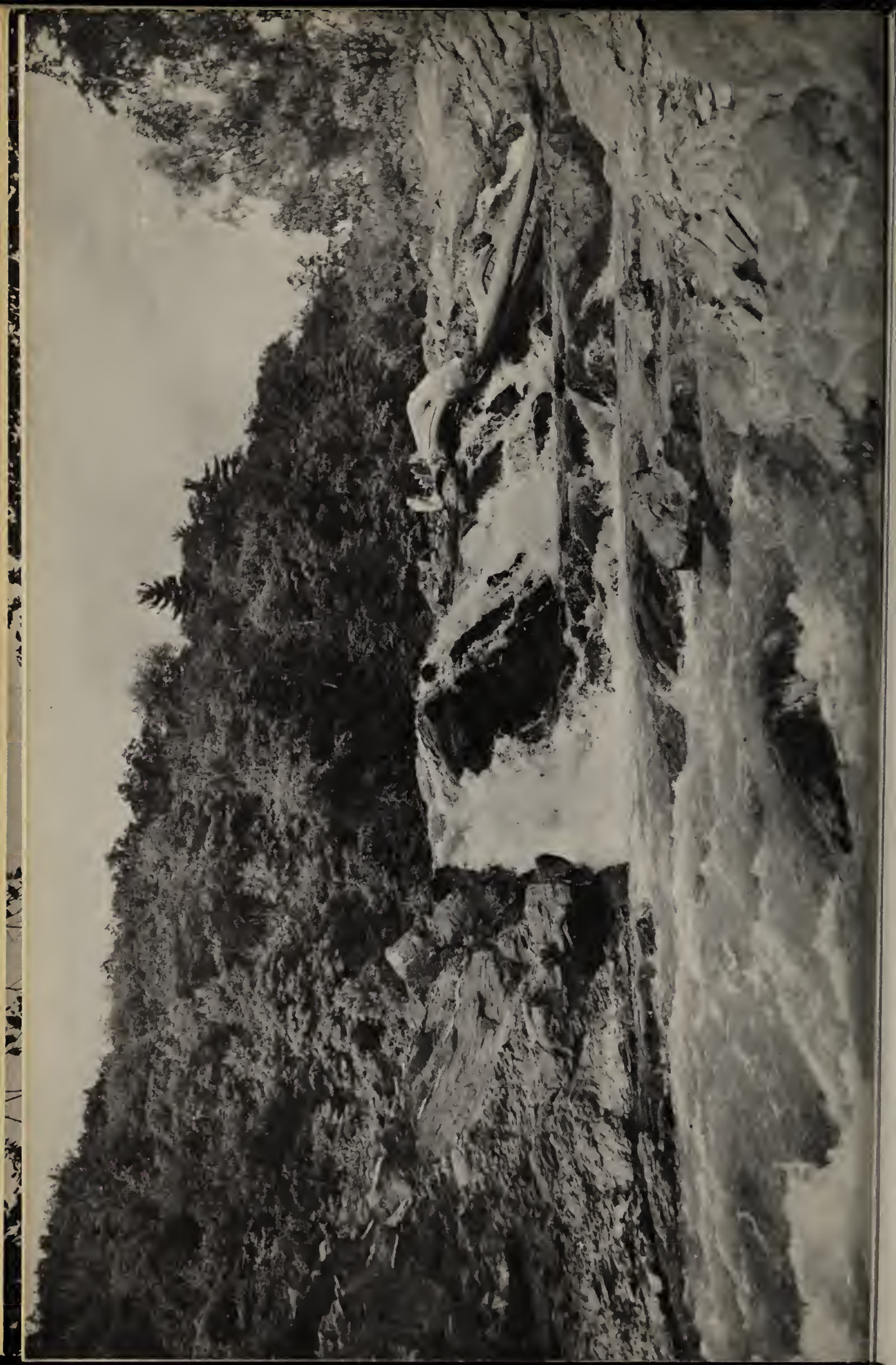
The location of the first house, so far back from the river, is very unusual in water front properties but is, perhaps, explained by the words of the deed:

"the cleared land being a parcel away in the woods."

Doubtless Peter located his house close by this clearing where his first farming operations would be carried on. It is quite probable that the Indians themselves did the clearing, for the land could scarcely have lain low enough or have been close enough to the river to be flooded and swept clear of timber growth by the force of the current, as was the case with so much of the earliest arable land.




THE "BRONK" COAT OF ARMS



TAWASENTHA (The Normanskill)

ALBANY

 LONG the valley of this stream ran an Indian trail which also came to serve the Dutch and English in their settlement of the Mohawk country. The source of the Normanskill is close to the present village of Duanesburg — flowing thence eastward, passing four to five miles south of Schenectady and emptying into the Hudson just south of Albany. To the eastward of Schenectady the Normanskill trail divided, one branch leading slightly northwest into Schenectady and the other slightly southwest, leaving the Normanskill to enter Fox's Creek Valley and so on to Schoharie Creek at the junction of these two streams.

The name "Normanskill" is derived from Albert Andriese Bratt De Noorman (Norseman) who had an early settlement in Beverwyck near the mouth of this creek. Along its lower banks were Indian settlements and later some of the earliest of the Dutch settlements. It was known to the Indians as "Tawasentha" and as such is familiar to everyone who has read Longfellow's poem "Hiawatha":

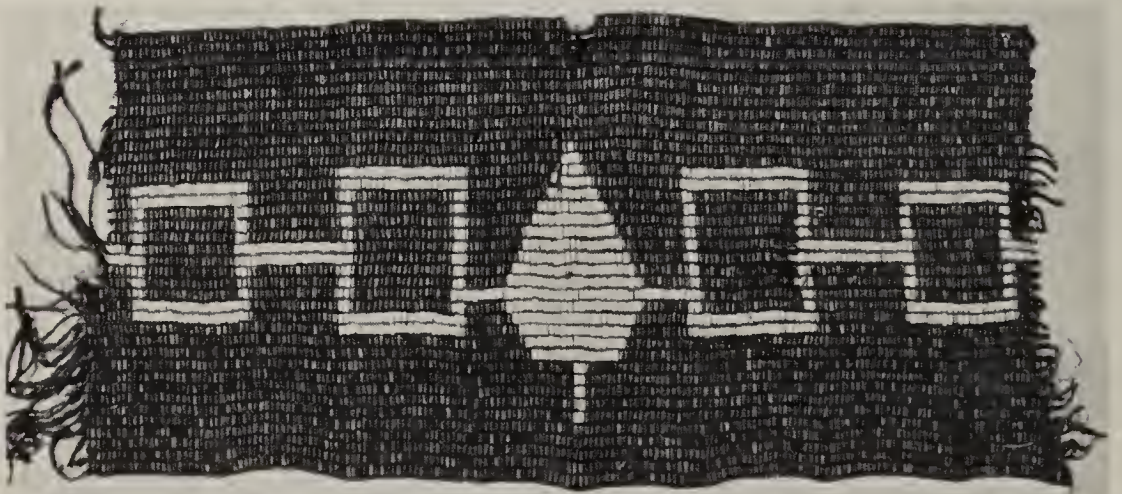
*"Should you ask me whence these stories?
Whence these legends and traditions,
I should answer — I should tell you,
I repeat them as I heard them
From the lips of Nawadaha,
The musician, the sweet singer . . .
In the vale of Tawasentha,
In the green and silent valley
By the pleasant water courses
Dwelt the singer Nawadaha . . .
There he sang of Hiawatha."*

On its banks was signed the treaty of Tawasentha between the Dutch and the Iroquois which cemented their mutual friendship and assured the Dutch a powerful ally throughout the troublesome times to come. This treaty was ratified thirty-nine times between its signing in 1618 and 1799 when the Clinton-

Sullivan Expedition broke the backbone of the Iroquois Confederacy.

One of the first Indian deeds conveying land in the "Vale of Tawasentha" was to a Dutchman named Jan Hendricks van Bael; it was ratified by Governor Lovelace on August 21st, 1672. There seems some doubt that van Bael ever settled on the land but by 1686 it was owned in two separate parts by Simon Volkertse Veeder and Jan Hendricks Vrooman, both of Schenectady. Some of the Veeder and Vrooman descendants still own parts of the original tract. An old family cemetery containing the graves of early Veeder settlers is a short distance southeast of Guilderland and just west of the road leading to Voorheesville. The Veeder farmhouse nearby was probably built in the early eighteen hundreds. The cemetery lies north of it at the top of the hill, smothered in a young forest growth. The earliest dates on the remaining stones seem to be soon after the year 1800.

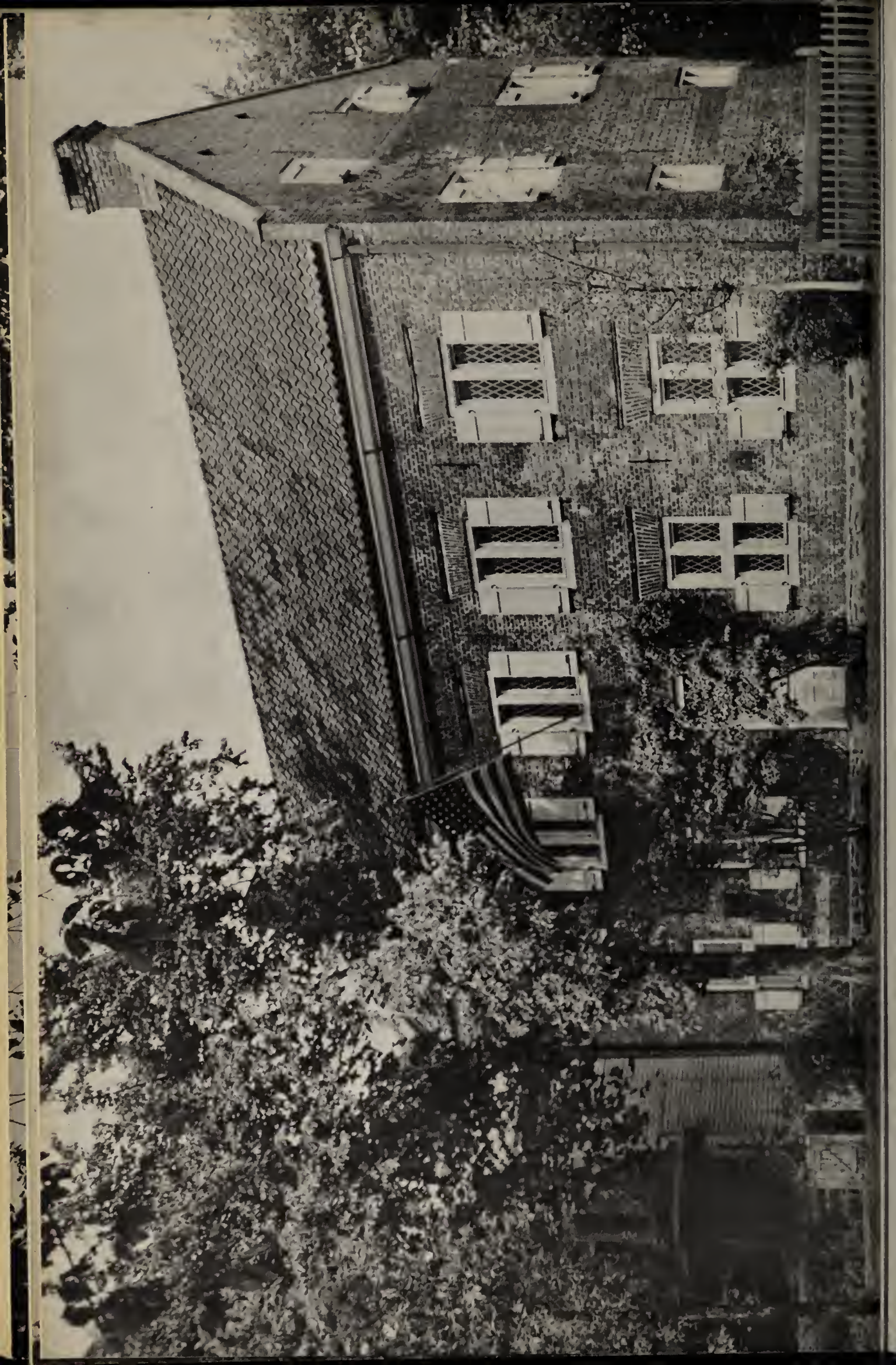
The Vrooman settlement was to the westward along the Cherry Valley turnpike near the present Watervliet reservoir where state markers indicate the home sites.



Hiawatha Belt, Depicting the Formation of the League of the Five Nations of Iroquois (In N. Y. State Museum)



VAN RENSSELAER'S ARMS.



FORT CRAILO

RENSSELAER

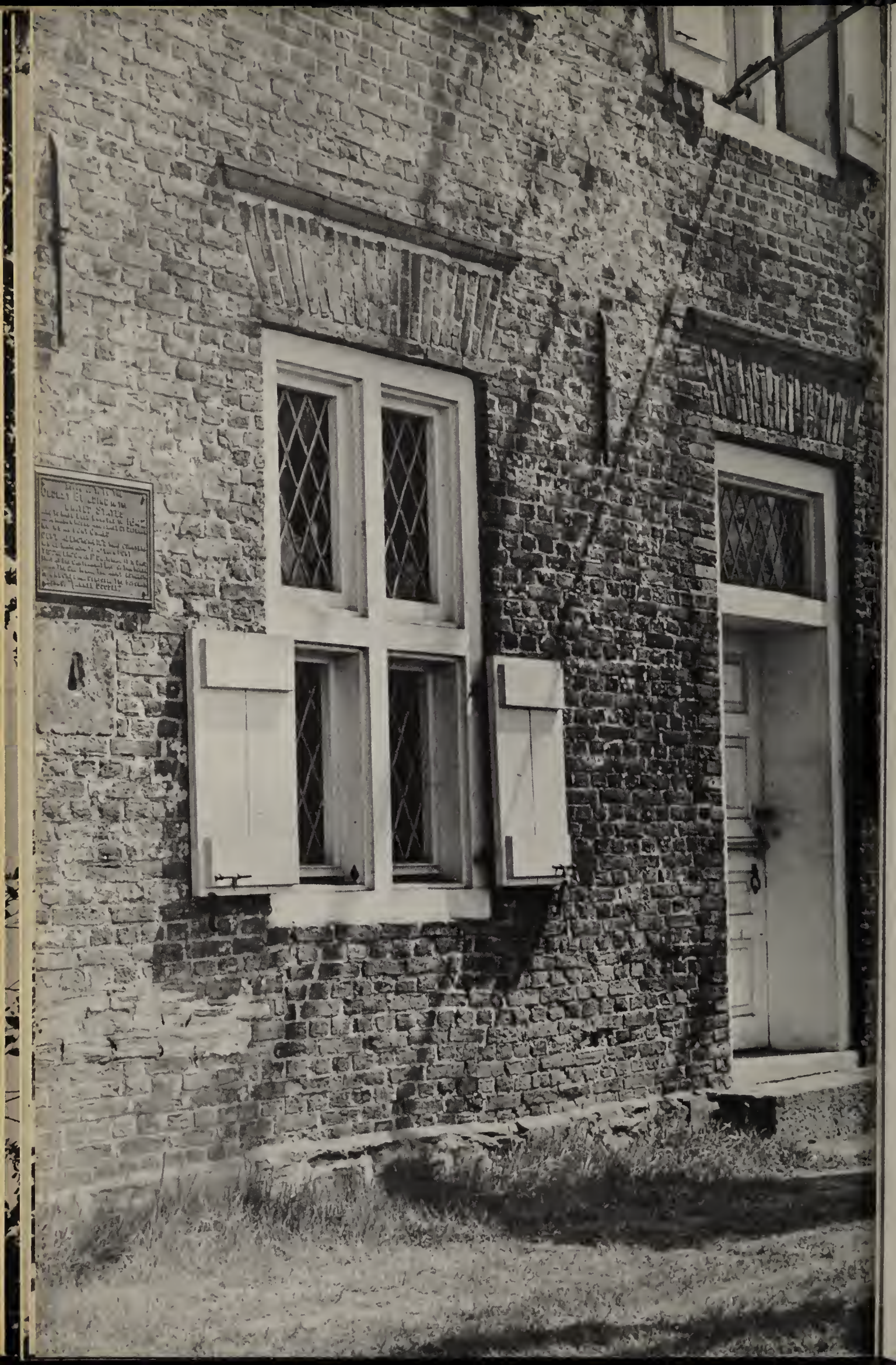
THIS is the nucleus of what was perhaps the most famous of all the manors of the Hudson Valley. It was the spot selected by the first Patroon, Killiaen Van Rensselaer, the rich jewel merchant of Amsterdam, Holland, on which to found his colony. His agent was his cousin, Arent Van Curler, who came over in 1637, a lad of 18 years, to represent the Patroon in the administration of this vast estate, which in extent conformed quite closely to the present boundaries of Rensselaer and Albany counties and contained some 700,000 acres extending southward from the mouth of the Mohawk along both banks of the Hudson, a distance of twenty-four miles.

In August of 1630 the Patroon's title was confirmed to him by patent, although the actual purchase had been made from the Indians a few years previous, and a start had been made toward a settlement when Van Curler arrived. Fortunately a great many of the original records and much of the correspondence concerning the administration of this estate have been preserved and translated from the Dutch, making it possible to follow the development of the Manor almost from its inception to its end, when the title expired with General Stephen Van Rensselaer in 1839.

A French Jesuit priest, Father Jogues, wrote after his visit to Rensselaer in 1643:

"This colony is composed of about a hundred persons who reside in some twenty-five or thirty houses built along the River, as each found most convenient. In the principal house lives the Patroon's agent; the minister has his apart in which service is performed."

Crailo seems to have been built for the first minister to the Colony, Domine Megapolensis, whom the Patroon employed for a period of six years. The Domine came over in one of the Patroon's ships in June, 1642, bringing his wife and four children, at a stipulated salary of 1000 florins per annum for the first three years and 1200 florins (about \$480.00) for the last three



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years. His contract called for a "fit dwelling to be erected for him on the east side of the river near the 'Groene Bosh' (Green Bush)." With him from Holland came a supply of coal and brick. Doubtless these brick went into the building of Crailo. While this was being constructed, his instructions were to stay with Van Curler. In a letter to the Patroon, dated June 16, 1643, Van Curler says:

"The house which I had planned for Do. Megapolensis did not suit * * * I have laid it aside (meaning the sawn framework). That which I intend to build this summer in the pine grove will be 34 ft. long by 19 ft. wide. It will be large enough for the first three or four years to preach in and can always be used as a (residence for the sexton for a school)."

A stone in the cellar wall of Crailo is inscribed "K. V. R. 1642" (Killiaen Van Rensselaer, 1642) and on an opposite stone is "Do. Megapolensis." Additions or improvements were made to the house in 1644 although it would seem the greatest changes, enlargements and additions were made in 1762, 1790 and 1800. However, after the building was presented to the State in 1933, it was at once remodeled to conform with its condition at a pre-Revolutionary period. It is now a museum, open to the public. The settlement was originally known as "Green Bush," after the dense growth of pine which was found there when the Dutch first set eyes upon it. It is now the city of Rensselaer and Crailo is but a few blocks south of the business section, facing the river. The detail picture of the front of the house shows two of the loop holes in this wall.

What vicissitudes this old structure has witnessed! And what varying purposes it has served! Originally, the simple and primitive home of a Dutch Domine, it later became a fort, surrounded with palisades. It was one of the first strongholds in the Colony. As the settlement across the river increased in size, a fort was built there, and Crailo no longer functioned as such. At the time the British Army under Abercrombie lay encamped here it served as his headquarters while awaiting colonial reinforcements from New England. When these reinforcements

← *Front Entrance, Fort Crailo*

arrived, they were such a motley crew, with such a wondrous assortment of guns, clothes and uniforms, that Dr. Richard Shuckburg, a surgeon in the British Army, composed the verses of Yankee Doodle as a satire on these troops. The tune, an old and catchy one, swept through the colonial ranks, and fittingly enough was sung with a gusto at Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga by this same "rabble at arms" which to the English had seemed such an immense joke a few years previous.

While the Domine lived here, and probably up to 1647, the building also served as a church. We find at this date a storehouse at Fort Orange, across the river, which was made to serve thereafter as a church. As it was a part of his contract to labor with the "savages," we may be sure that there were many of them in attendance at services here in Crailo. The Domine wrote a pamphlet, descriptive of the Indians and of the country in the Colony, which was published in Holland in 1644. From it the following is quoted: "The country here is like Germany, very mountainous, partly soil, partly rock, with elevations so high they appear to almost touch the sky."

He then describes the forest with "the finest fir trees the eye ever saw" and mentions the luxuriance of the grape vines and "the excellent quality and sweetness of the grapes," as well as their size, "as big as plums." He says, "If the people would cultivate the vines they could have as good wine as Germany or France." He speaks of pressing out a boatload of grapes and says, "As long as the wine was new it tasted better than any French or Rhenish must." And of the abundance of game he says, "There are many turkeys as large as in Holland. In the forest are a great plenty of deer which in Autumn are as fat as any Holland cow can be. I have had them with fat more than two fingers thick on the ribs." Of the pigeons he says, "They fly together in thousands and sometimes even as many as fifty are killed at one shot." He also speaks of lions, bears, wolves, foxes and many rattlesnakes.

His description of the falls of the Mohawk is also interesting by comparison with its present-day condition, it now being possible at times to walk across the brink of the falls dry shod because of the diversion of water through the mill races. He says the "Mohawk River is 500 to 600 paces wide coming out of

the Mahakas Country about four leagues north of us" and "flowing between two high rocky banks and falls from a height equal to that of a church with such noise that we can sometimes hear it here with us (at Albany). The water is as clear as crystal and fresh as milk." Referring to the fishing he says, "My boys have caught in an hour fifty, each a foot long." He describes the summers as being "pretty hot" and the winters "very cold." He says "the rivers usually freeze over in December and stay so until March."

In describing the Indian language the Domine speaks of the difficulty he has had in learning it, saying the same word is pronounced differently. Of the Indians themselves, he says they have

"well formed features, bodies and limbs, black hair and eyes and yellow skin. In summer they go naked 'having only their private parts covered with a patch.' The children to 14 years go stark naked. In winter they hang about them undressed skins, sometimes sewn together. They go bareheaded. Women with long hair tied together a little and hanging down the back. The men have a lock hanging down either or both sides, but from forehead to neck a band the breadth of two or three fingers shortened to about two or three fingers long, standing on end like a cock's comb. They paint their faces red or blue and look like the Devil himself. They smear their head with bear's grease, they say, to make their hair grow better and to prevent their having lice. When they travel they carry maize, a wooden bowl, kettle and spoon, and, when hungry, they forthwith make a fire and cook. They get fire by rubbing two pieces of stick together and get it very quickly."

Referring to their family life he speaks of their moral laxity as they "generally live without marriage." As to their hardness he says the women after delivery "go about immediately and wash the young and themselves in the river or the snow, be it ever so cold. They will not lie down for they say if they do they would soon die. The men have great authority over their concubines, so that if they do anything which does not please and raises their passion they take an axe and knock them in the head and there is an end of it." In speaking of their cruelty, he

mentions the treatment accorded the Jesuits saying, "They killed one but the Jesuit (whose left thumb was cut off and all the nails and parts of his fingers were bitten) we released and sent him to France by a yacht." Their houses are made "very close and warm of the bark of trees and they kindle their fire in the middle of them. They make large canoes to accommodate as many as fourteen persons from a hollowed log." He says, "They have set times for going to catch fish, bears, panthers, beavers, and eels. In the spring they catch vast quantities of shad and lampreys, which are exceedingly large here, lay them on the bark of trees in the sun and dry them thoroughly hard, which they keep for the following winter. Their corn they put in deep pits and preserve it the whole winter."

From these quotations one is helped immensely to get a picture of the colony at the time of the earliest settlers. The letters of the first Patroon are also helpful in understanding the difficulties he experienced in administering his holding through the eyes of others at such a great distance and with so unreliable and infrequent sailings as were common then. In one of his letters we find him directing Van Curler to make copies of his letters and send them along by another boat in the event the first boat is lost. At that time the voyage was considered long and hazardous.

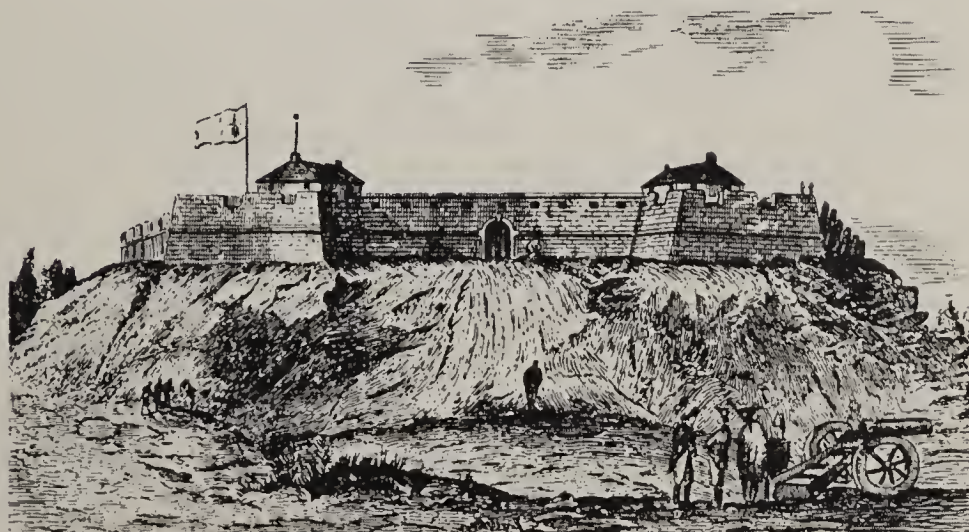
In 1646 the old Patroon died. His son, John (or Johannes) became the second Patroon and visited the colony on one or two occasions. The Manor was administered by Barent Van Slichtenhorst until 1652, to be succeeded by Johannes' half brother, Jan Baptiste, who directed it until 1658.

He was followed by Jeremias, who became director and proprietor and continued in charge until his death in 1674. He was an amiable, active, and a fair-minded manager. When the English captured the Colony he took the oath of allegiance to Charles II and James. His son, Killiaen, born in 1663, was a minor at the time of his death and the Manor was governed by his Uncles as well as his Mother, Maria Van Cortlandt Van Rensselaer (1645-1689). Killiaen became director in 1684 and was the first Patroon to reside in the Manor, although his father, Jeremias, had lived for a time at the "Flatts," then considered the best farm.

This was the farm that had been selected and improved by Arent Van Curler when he was governing.

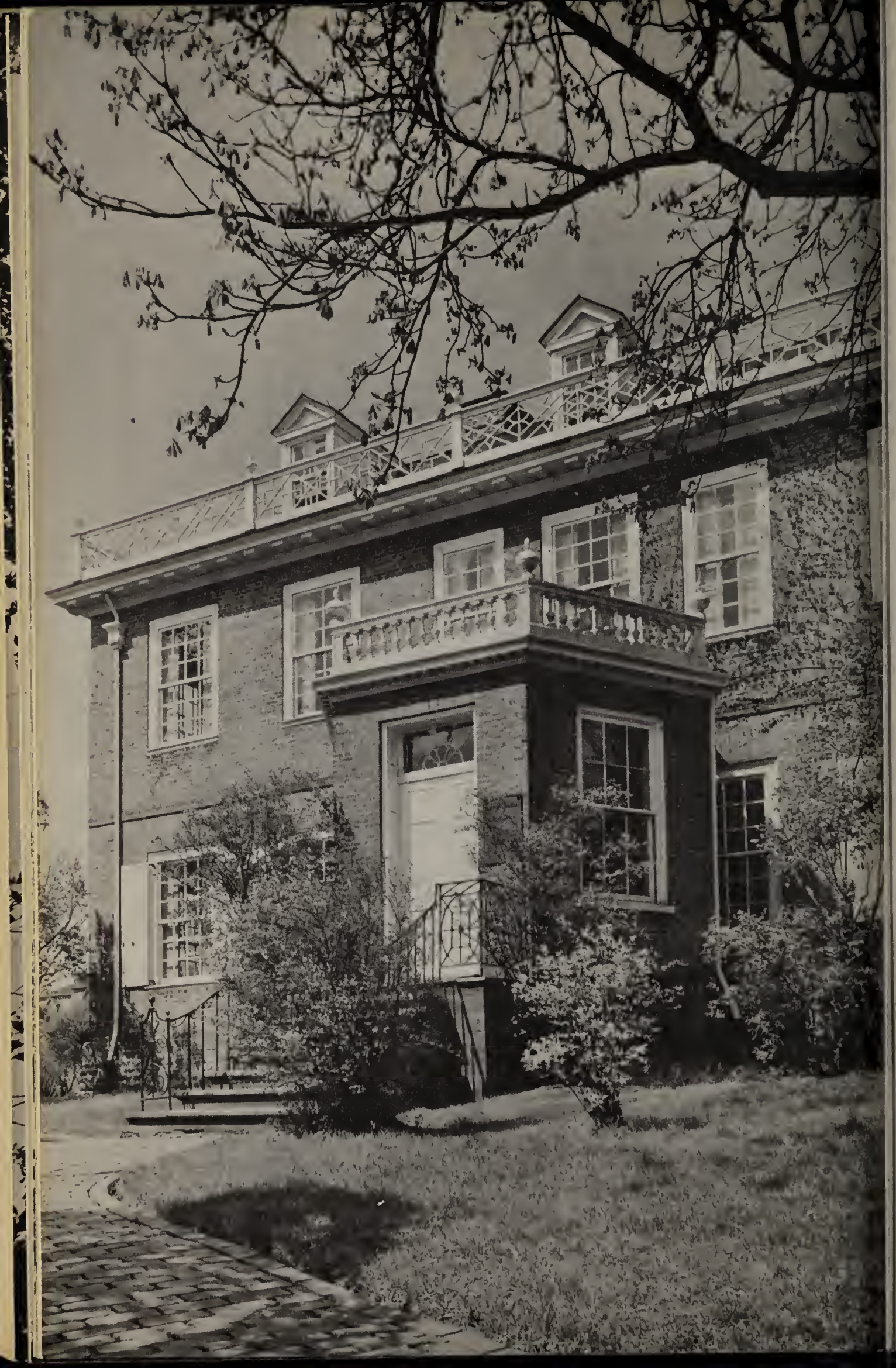
Previous to the time when the English captured the Colony there had been bitter disputes as to who really owned Beverwyck (Albany), the Dutch West India Company (under whose partial control the Patroons had existed) or the Van Rensselaers themselves. But the English settled the question in favor of the Patroon. The English Governor, Dongan, was instructed to so advise the Van Rensselaers. But wisely, Governor Dongan secured a release "to the town and sixteen miles into the country for a commons, to the King." Killiaen's mother, Maria Van Cortlandt Van Rensselaer, lived at the "Flatts" at least a portion of the time. She was there from June, 1677, to June, 1683. During much of this time she also had a house on Jonker (now State) Street, in Albany, where she also lived. About this time Crailo was leased to tenants, but later was again occupied by the Van Rensselaers themselves. Hendrick, a full brother of Killiaen 2nd, inherited Crailo and the lower Manor at Claverack. In the line of descent from both the brothers, Killiaen 2nd and Hendrick, are many illustrious names. Their wives came from the prominent families of the time, the Schuylers and the Livingstons. Their daughters intermarried into these same families as well as with the Gansevoorts and the Ten Broecks.

Of their earlier homes, we have remaining Crailo, "The Flatts," "The Pastures" and the "Lower Manor House" at Claverack. The several other manor houses built along the river have been brushed away by the hand of time.



FORT FREDERICK ON THE HILL

It Guarded Albany from 1676 to 1783



THE PASTURES (Schuyler Mansion)

ALBANY

THIS, the name of the Schuyler estate, is pitifully incongruous as one looks at it today. When built, the house was surrounded by lush lawns and fields stretching eastward toward the river, while to the northward, perhaps a half mile away, lay the City of Albany with its few prim streets flanked by Dutch houses and Fort Frederick crumbling into disuse at the middle of what is now the State Street hill.

In its more than three centuries of growth, Albany has completely engulfed "The Pastures," leaving the house perched on one corner of a small city block. This site, because it did not conform to subsequent grading plans, is left high above adjacent streets and set apart by a heavy stone wall which seems, fittingly enough, to place it on a pedestal.

One must close his eyes to these incongruities to picture the place as it looked when its illustrious owner, Major General Philip Schuyler, built it in 1761-1762. No doubt a great deal of the charm of the house and the details of its architecture are traceable to "Sweet Kitty Van Rensselaer," the General's wife, under whose watchful eye the greater portion of the building was done, since business kept the General abroad during its construction. He made the trip for the British General Bradstreet, who at that time found it impossible to leave. In her supervision Madam Schuyler was ably assisted by General Bradstreet.

The house is of brick, sixty-three feet in front, forty-seven feet deep, and with a double hip roof surrounded by a Chippendale railing. The main entrance is from the east through a vestibule (of later date) into a dignified hall, twenty feet wide. A feeling of spaciousness is due perhaps to the height of the ceiling which is no less than twelve feet. The walls are panelled to a height of about five feet. Beyond, at the rear, its upper portion seen through a beautiful fan window, is the famous staircase with its hand carved balustrade, executed in three different patterns of the "rope" design. In the hand rail is a deep notch made by an Indian tomahawk thrown at the General's daughter, Margaret, as she fled up the stairs with a baby sister in her arms.

The wide halls of the main and second floors divide the house almost equally. The front room on the left was the drawing room. Its large deep-cased windows and window seats, set in the panelled walls, must have been a perfect background for the wedding of Alexander Hamilton (aide-de-camp and intimate friend of George Washington) to his beloved Elizabeth Schuyler.

This romance began when Elizabeth with her father was visiting General Washington at Headquarters in Morristown, N. J., in 1779. Here she met Hamilton, fell in love, and married him the next year. Tench Tilghman had this to say of the bride:

"I was prepossessed of this young lady the moment I saw her, a brunette with the most good natured, dark, lovely eyes that I ever saw, which threw a beam of good temper and benevolence over her entire countenance."

The furnishings of the house leave little more to be added, other than the persons themselves, to re-enact this event.

Adjoining this room, at the rear, was a suite of rooms used by the General. One of them was his bed chamber and another, opening from it, was his study.

The slave quarters and kitchen, torn down in 1850, were separate wooden buildings at the rear of the house. On the second floor two bedrooms open from the hall on either side. The front room at the north was generously given to Burgoyne and his staff, following his defeat at the battle of Saratoga. Above this, in the large attic, one can see the substantial manner in which this remarkable house was constructed. A basement underlies the entire house.

The romance which so beautifully enshrouds General Schuyler and his family has enriched the building with this same romantic appeal. What a happy, full and devoted life they led; devoted to each other and to their country's welfare. One easily remembers the important events which have taken place here. The Schuylers were royal hosts and in reviewing the long lists of famous guests, there comes an appreciation of the importance of these Schuylers to affairs of state. They were noted for that rare spirit of hospitality which successfully put everyone at his ease. Tench Tilghman, famous Marylander, statesman and

patriot, who has been quoted previously, sums it up by saying: "There is something in the behavior of the General, his wife and daughters, that makes one acquainted with them instantly." Surely this is high praise, coming from one who knew so well the meaning of Southern hospitality.

The list of guests included the foremost men of the time: Benjamin Franklin and, as has been stated, Alexander Hamilton, who was married here; Aaron Burr (who later killed Hamilton in their duel), Lafayette, St. Clair, Baron Steuben, Clinton, Gansevoort, Charles Carrol of Carrollton (another famous Marylander and loyal friend of General Schuyler), the British General Burgoyne, and the Polish Kosciusko. After the war, Washington, while on an inspection trip, visited at "The Pastures."

When speculating on the hospitality accorded General Burgoyne, the thought comes instantly that this should have been a most difficult ordeal. Burgoyne had just ordered the complete destruction of General Schuyler's country estate at Saratoga, a most valuable and fruitful property, burning all crops, barns, and buildings. Yet Schuyler was tolerant enough to accept the loss as one of the misfortunes of war and to welcome to his house the man who was directly responsible for it. General Burgoyne in writing of Schuyler's hospitality says:

"He sent his Aide-de-camp to conduct me to Albany in order, as he expressed it, to procure me better quarters than a stranger might be able to find. This gentleman conducted me to a very elegant house, and to my great surprise presented me to Mrs. Schuyler and her family; and in this General's house I remained during my whole stay in Albany, with a table of more than twenty covers for me and my friends and every other possible demonstration of hospitality."

Benjamin Franklin, too, had special reason to remember his stay here, for no sooner had he arrived than he was seized with an illness which kept him closely confined under the loving care of Mrs. Schuyler. Doubtless his appreciation was no less than that of Baron Dieskau, who, wounded at the Battle of Lake George, was sent with his party to Albany by Colonel Johnson in the

care of General Schuyler. Following is a quotation from one of his letters to General Schuyler:

"One can add nothing to the politeness of Madam your Mother, and Madame your wife. Every day there comes from them to the Baron, fruits and other rare sweets which are of great service to him. He orders me on this subject to express to you all that he owes to the attention of these ladies."

Of course this did not occur at "The Pastures" for the General was married in 1755, nine days after the Battle of Lake George, and "The Pastures" was not built until 1762. They were probably the guests of Mayor Johannes Schuyler, the General's father.

General Philip Schuyler and his wife came from two of the country's oldest families. Mrs. Schuyler (Kitty Van Rensselaer) was born in 1734 at the lower Van Rensselaer Manor House, which is still standing, at Claverack. She married the General in this house. He was the son of Mayor Johannes Schuyler, Jr., and Cornelia Van Cortlandt, and was born in 1733 in his father's house at the southeast corner of State and Pearl Streets in Albany. Mrs. Schuyler died in 1803 and the General followed her the succeeding year.

The span of his life had encompassed those important years which brought about the formation of the United States. As a lad, he knew the Indians intimately; made trips with them into their country in a birch canoe. He later fought side by side with the English to drive the French from the continent, and as the war of the Revolution came on, we see him looming with ever greater importance across the pages of history. He lived to see the war ended and the new government established.

The following excerpts are taken from two of his letters. They express a fine, deep, devout sentiment and are helpful in arriving at a just appreciation of the man.

On the loss of his wife he wrote to his son-in-law, Hamilton:

"After giving and receiving for nearly half a century, a series of mutual evidences of an affection and of a friendship which increased as we advanced in life, the

shock was great and sensibly felt, to be thus suddenly deprived of a beloved wife, the mother of my children, and the soothing companion of my declining days."

When he, himself, ill at Albany, received the news of the fatal results of Hamilton's duel (July 12th, 1804) he wrote his daughter:

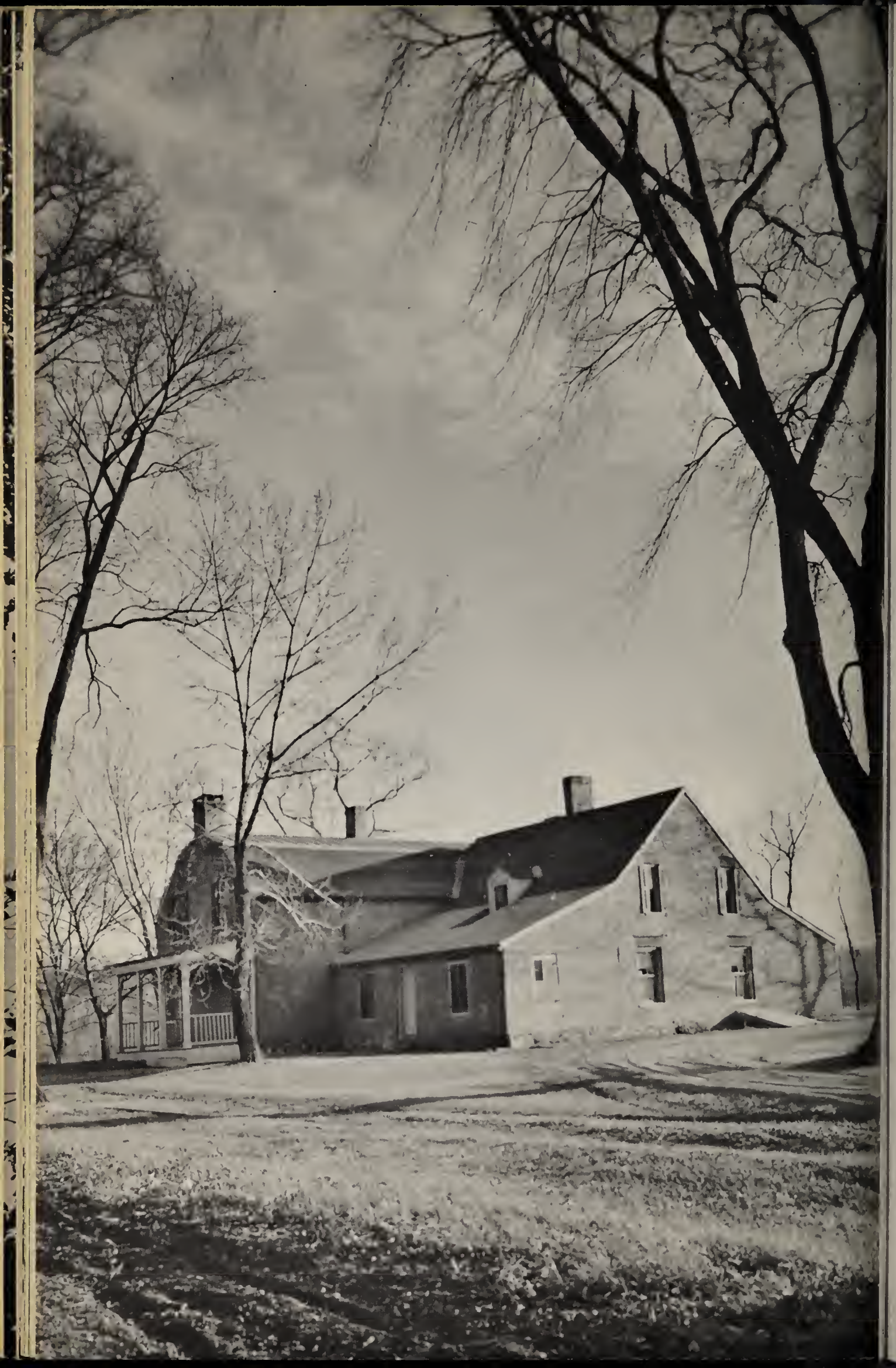
"My dear, Dearly Beloved and affectionate child:

This morning Mr. Church's letter has announced to me the severe affliction which it has pleased the Supreme Being to inflict on you, on me and on all dear to us. If aught, under Heaven, could aggravate the affliction I experience, it is that, incapable of moving or being moved, I can not fly to you to pour the balm of comfort into your afflicted bosom to water it with my tears, and to receive yours on mine."

*Beaver
at Bay*



*City Seal
of 1752*



DE VLACKTE — THE FLATTS (PHILIP PIETERSEN SCHUYLER RESIDENCE)

WATERVLIET



KNOWLEDGE of just when this old farm was first set apart and cultivation begun seems to have escaped everyone who has written of it. The building has been credited to Arent Van Curler — the identical building now standing — and yet it seems scarcely possible. The inference drawn from the old records is that Van Curler had his eye on the place from the very first. He sailed for the colony in December, 1637, as manager, representing the first Patroon, Killiaen Van Rensselaer, the owner of the Manor of Rensselaer, of which this land was a part. In 1643 the Patroon wrote Van Curler as follows:

“You have great plans about the farm at the Great Flatts but see to it that it does not become too expensive and that care be taken about the servants so that the undertaking may do you credit and be a profit to me.”

Through the years 1641–47 there was a great deal of building; men were credited on the Van Rensselaer records for work at “The Flatts.” Van Curler was making improvements on the farm in the name of the Patroon. This then, must date the first house.

By 1648–49 it was being leased out and in 1651 we find another direct reference to it as “a farm called de Vlackte used by Arent Van Curler being the best farm” for which he paid 1000 guilders rent. There were 10 horses and 18 cows on the farm at this time. At about this time the old Patroon died and Van Curler made a business trip to Holland. While there he negotiated a lease for “de Vlackte” with representatives of the new owners which remained in effect until 1660, or about the time he moved to Schenectady.

It is indeed very questionable if any of the original buildings of Van Curler’s tenancy remain. What makes it seem even less likely is that Richard Van Rensselaer, youngest son of the first Patroon, came over from Holland in 1664. Soon after his arrival he selected “The Flatts” as a site and built a home which he

occupied from 1668 to 1670, when he returned permanently to Holland. The buildings remaining are seemingly those of Van Rensselaer except for some which replaced those destroyed by a disastrous fire which nearly destroyed the house causing it to be largely rebuilt.

In 1672 Van Rensselaer sold the property to Philip Pietersen Schuyler — the original settler of this name whose wife was Margarita Van Slichtenhorst. The property conveyed consisted of the house, barn, seeded grain and certain household effects of Van Rensselaer for "700 beavers and fl. 1600, Holland money, amounting altogether to fl. 8000."

On one of Major Schuyler's expeditions into the wilderness in pursuit of a French raiding party, an acute shortage of provisions faced the pursuing force. As Schuyler was arising from his night's rest he was called to the camp-fire where his savages were engaged in feasting from a boiling kettle. When he drew near, one of the savages offered him, from the kettle, a human hand taken from one of the Frenchmen who had fallen in the engagement of the preceding day.

The barn just south of the house is the identical building in which the Iroquois were lodged when they came calling on their much esteemed "Quider." This was as close as the Indian tongue could come to pronouncing "Peter."

Colonel Peter Schuyler then inherited the property from his father, and like him amply proved his worth to the Colony and its military affairs. He married Engeltje, daughter of Captain Goosen Gerritse Van Schaick.

Colonel Peter commanded the force sent from Albany to pursue the French and Indian raiders who burned Schenectady in 1690. It was he who took the five Indian Sachems, or Chiefs, to London in 1709 in an effort to impress upon them the wealth and power that was England's, for at this time the French were making desperate efforts to alienate the affections of the Mohawks from the Dutch and English. It was evidently a most successful venture and created a remarkable stir in London and at Court. Each of the Sachems, at the Queen's command, sat for his portrait, dressed in full Indian costume. The famous King Hendrick was one of the number. Unfortunately, one of the Chiefs died during the voyage over but it seems not to have

dimmed the enthusiasm of the others, all of whom returned with Colonel Peter the next year. Colonel Peter was the first Mayor of Albany in 1686 and we find his name signed to many interesting and important documents of that time. He died about 1724.

1700741

Philip Schuyler (1696–1758), Colonel Peter's eldest son, inherited the farm. It was he who married his cousin, Margarita Schuyler (1701–1782). In 1747, due to Indian troubles, "The Flatts" was stockaded and the place became a military headquarters. There is mention of it being "filled with soldiers" in 1758. This was when the troops were marching against Crown Point and to the Battle of Lake George. An appeal was made for a garrison at the time it was stockaded but this was never granted. However, due to the very kindly feeling that had always existed between the Indians and the Schuylers, the home was never molested in any way.

The activity at Fort Ticonderoga, and the continual passing and re-passing of soldiers, made it a vantage point of some considerable importance. Lord Howe was among those who stopped here on his way to Ticonderoga. It is said that "Aunt Schuyler" became very much attached to him. She insisted on serving him with her own hands and kissed him when she bade him "Good-bye." She could not foresee that her urgent invitation to stop on his return was a pleasure neither would know. He was killed early in the battle while fighting at the head of his troops.

"Aunt Schuyler," on hearing of his death is said to have mourned for him with an "intensity that amazed her friends." Accounts differ as to where Lord Howe is buried. Some have said that he was buried near where he fell in what is now the town of Ticonderoga, but the claim is not well substantiated. It seems clear that his body was brought to Albany, and that the cortege paused at "The Flatts" en route. A memorial slab in the vestibule of St. Peter's Church in Albany states that his remains lie there.

The house at "The Flatts" was badly damaged by fire, as has been mentioned. This was following Colonel Peter's death in 1759. Aunt Schuyler was sitting on the lawn at the time it was discovered and she directed the efforts of the slaves and others in

fighting the fire and salvaging whatever could be gotten out of the house.

Aunt Schuyler was of such generous proportions as to forbid her taking an active part, though she has been described as but a "wisp of a girl" as a bride of eighteen, in 1719. While her house was being rebuilt, she lived with her husband's brother Peter, whose home was on the hill to the westward. At this time the King's troops, stationed in Albany, were under the command of Colonel Bradstreet. With their grateful assistance, given in acknowledgment of Aunt Schuyler's bountiful hospitality, "The Flatts" was soon restored. This was in 1759, yet by 1776 these same troops would gladly have destroyed the entire estate which then extended some two miles up and down the river which formed its eastern boundary. Aunt Schuyler lived to see the signing of the Declaration of Independence and died in her eighty-second year, in 1782.

Colonel Philip of "The Pastures" spent much of his boyhood with her. He also lived here with his bride for a time following the war, in 1760. The next year he left on his unpremeditated trip to England, while "The Pastures" was being built.

Much is known of the house at "The Flatts" and of this period from descriptions given by Mrs. Anne Grant in her "Memoirs of an American Lady" (who was Aunt Schuyler). Mrs. Grant lived for quite a long time with "Aunt Schuyler," as she called her hostess. The following quotation, descriptive of "The Flatts," is from her book:

"It was a large brick house of two, or rather three stories (for there were excellent attics) besides a sunk story, finished with exactest neatness. The lower floor and two spacious rooms, with large light closets; on the first there were three rooms, and in the upper one, four. Through the middle of the house was a wide passage with opposite front and back doors, which in summer admitted a stream of air peculiarly grateful to the languid senses. It was furnished with chairs and pictures like a summer parlour. Here the family usually sat in hot weather, when there were no ceremonious strangers. One room, I should have said, in the greater house, only was opened, for the domestic friends of the family occupied neat little bedrooms in the attic or the winter house.

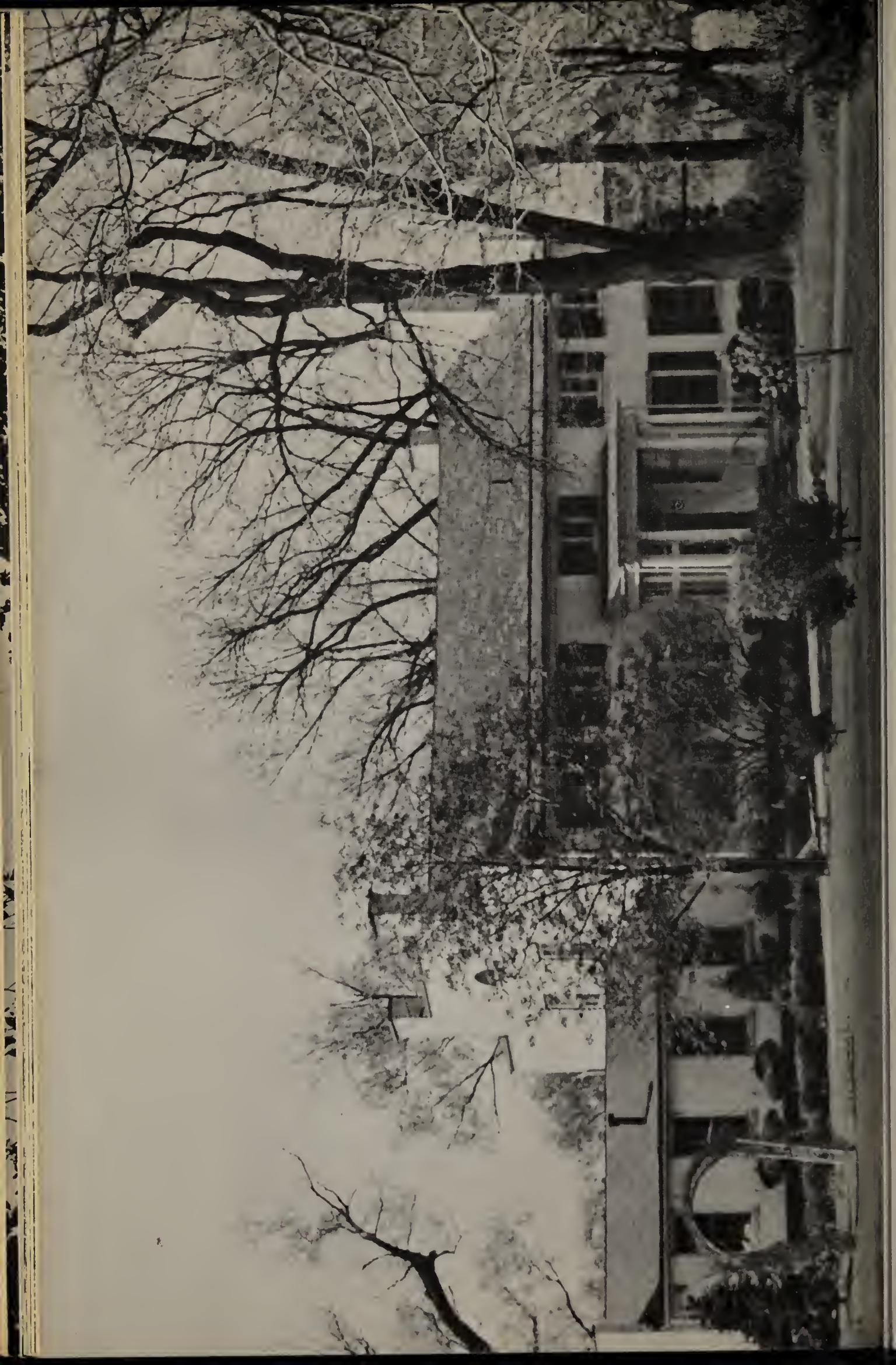
This house contained no drawing room; that was unheard of luxury; the winter rooms had carpets; the lobby had oilcloth painted in lozenges to imitate blue and white marble. The best bedroom was hung with family portraits, some of which were admirably executed, and in the eating room which, by the way, was rarely used for the purpose, were some Scriptural paintings. The house fronted the river, on the bank of which, under shades of elm or sycamore, ran the great road to Saratoga, Stillwater and the northern lakes; a little simple avenue of Marella cherry trees enclosed with a white rail led to the road and river, not three hundred yards distant."

Across the little lane, along which now grow stately elms, was the family burying ground, containing over fifty graves, the resting place of the Schuylers of this line of descent. Here slept old "Quider" who died in 1684. The brown stone markers, once aligned in prim rows, tottered pitifully after standing two centuries at "Attention." Recently, to insure better care, the stones and the burials which they marked (some thirty odd in all) were removed to the Albany Rural Cemetery.

Following Aunt Schuyler's death, the home passed to Stephen Van Rensselaer and thereafter was repeatedly divided and subdivided, losing with each change of ownership more of its lordly expanse.

Van Curler chose wisely when he selected this farm, acknowledged by him the "best farm," for a part of it still produces a wealth of vegetables under the skillful cultivation of an up-to-the-minute truck gardener. Another part of the farm is still owned by the Schuylers, but none of the old name live here.





LANSING HOUSE

(LANSINGBURGH) TROY

THE original patent to the area of which Lansingburgh is a part was granted by Governor Lovelace in 1670 to Harmen Vedder and Robert Sanders, both of Albany. On August 21st, 1670, Vedder sold his

“half of the land called Stone Arabia, with all his title thereto, free and unencumbered, with no claims standing or issuing against the same, save the Lord’s right, without the grantor’s making the least pretention thereto any more, also acknowledging that he is fully paid and satisfied therefor, the first penny with the last, by the hands of Robert Sanders.”

The exact interpretation of the name “Stone Arabia” is rather obscure. Some have said it referred to the large stones found so abundantly in its soil. Yet another large and important tract of land in the Mohawk Valley, near Canajoharie, was also known as the “Stone Arabia Patent,” and no mention of stone is made on this tract.

Robert Sanders sold the land to Johannes Wendell, a farmer also of Albany, in 1683, and Wendell added to his acreage by further purchases. His son Robert inherited the land and sold the northern portion in 1763 to Abraham Jacob Lansingh for 300 pounds. From this conveyance there was an exception of a tract previously sold to Simon Van Antwerp, then in the possession of William Rogers.

It is not quite certain who the original settler was but the probability is that it was Robert Wendell. It is also known that when Wendell sold to Abraham Jacob Lansingh, William Rogers was living there (1763). A map drawn in 1773 shows the house back a little distance from the river and slightly north of the Rogers house as the property of H. Van Arnum. Also two other names are shown on the northern part of the grant, these being Peter Howey and Robert Wendell.

This same map located Abraham Jacob Lansingh’s home, the one pictured, now at 110th Street. It is credited as being the

oldest building in greater Troy, although the builder is not definitely known. Possibly Wendell built the home before he sold the land to Lansingh, in which event it would have been built soon after his purchase of the property. If not, then Lansingh built it. In either event the house would be close to 200 years old.

Abraham Jacob had three sons, Jacob A., who inherited the homestead and who died February 25th, 1801; Cornelius, who died April 23rd, 1842, and Levinus, who died in the year 1837. Levinus lived for a time at No. 3 Grove Street (at the corner of River Street, now Troy). The census of 1790 mentions Jacob under the district heading of Schaghticoke Town and gives his family as one son, two daughters and three slaves. The other two sons are listed under Rensselaer Town. Cornelius is shown as having one son and three slaves and Levinus with four sons, three daughters and three slaves.

Bancker's map of 1787 shows the tract northernmost along the river as belonging to Jacob A. Lansingh and comprising 620 acres; next south of this is Levinus Lansing's farm of 193 acres. This latter farm was bounded on the south by North Street. Adjoining it on the south is the village of Lansingburgh extending from North to South Streets. All of this was a part of the original Abraham J. Lansingh estate. In 1770 he had it surveyed and laid out into town lots "for erecting of a city by the name of Lansingburgh." It was first called by the Dutch "Nieuw Stadt" to distinguish it from the "Quide Stadt" which was Albany. By 1786 there were 400 inhabitants living there. The village of Lansingburgh is thirty years older than the Township.

The issue of Friday, October 14, 1791, of the *American Spy*, published at Lansingburgh, contains the following notices:

"Died last Sunday evening, at his seat, in the 72nd year of his age, Abraham J. Lansingh, Esq., the original proprietor of this town. On Saturday morning, preceding, Mrs. Catherine Lansingh, his consort, died in the 69th year of her age."

The old Lansingh burial ground was on the river bank a short distance below the homestead. No stone remains to mark the location of a single grave. It is said that some of these remains

were long ago reinterred elsewhere. Opposite, across the main channel of the river, is Haver's Island and the old Van Schaick homestead.

Among other very interesting old houses in this locality is the large two-story building on the east side of River Street, the second dwelling north of Hoosick Street, Troy. It is said to have been built soon after the French war and at the time of the Revolution belonged to a Royalist from whom it was confiscated and held by the State until about 1810, when it was sold to one E. Hawkins.

Just north of this is the old Spafford house where Horatio Spafford lived. He was the editor of the well known *Gazetteer of the State of New York*, 1812, and another published in 1824. Here he died of the cholera in 1832.

The founder of the Lansingh family in the Hudson Valley was Gerrit Frederickse Lansingh (the suffix "se" has the force of son), born in Holland. He came to New Amsterdam, bringing with him three sons and three daughters. He died some time before the end of the year 1679. One of the sons was Hendrick G. Lansingh, who was in Albany as early as 1666. Hendrick G. Lansingh died July 1st, 1709. He had five children, one of whom was Jacob Hendrick, who died in 1756. He married Helena Pruyn and had ten children, one of whom was Abraham Jacobus Lansingh, baptized April 24th, 1720. This Abraham Jacobus Lansingh was the ancestor of the Lansings of Lansingburg and Troy and the founder of Lansingburg.

In the minutes of the Committee of Safety which functioned during the Revolution are entries concerning the Lansinghs. Cornelius Lansingh appeared before the Albany Committee on December 2nd, 1777, and complained that "a Captain and one hundred men in the Continental Service entered his enclosure (by order of Coll. Hay) and cut the timber from the same and prays relief in the premises . . ."

Of Jacob A. Lansingh we find the following entry:

"Jacob A. Lansingh being brought before this Board as being a person inimical to the Rights and Liberties of America and having denied the charge * * * "Ordered that the said Jacob A. Lansingh be liberated from his

present confinement on his entering into bond with security in the penal sum of five hundred pounds for his appearance before this Board at their next General Meeting and then and there abide and perform such order and determination as this Board shall make in the premises."

This bond was evidently secured at once for in the minutes of the same meeting appears the following:

"I, Nanning Visscher, do bind myself my Heirs, Exec'rs & Ad'rs unto John Barclay, Esq'r, Chairman of the Committee of the City and County of Albany, in the sum of five hundred pounds that Jacob A. Lansingh shall personally appear before the said Committee at their next general meeting as Witness my Hand date above mentioned.

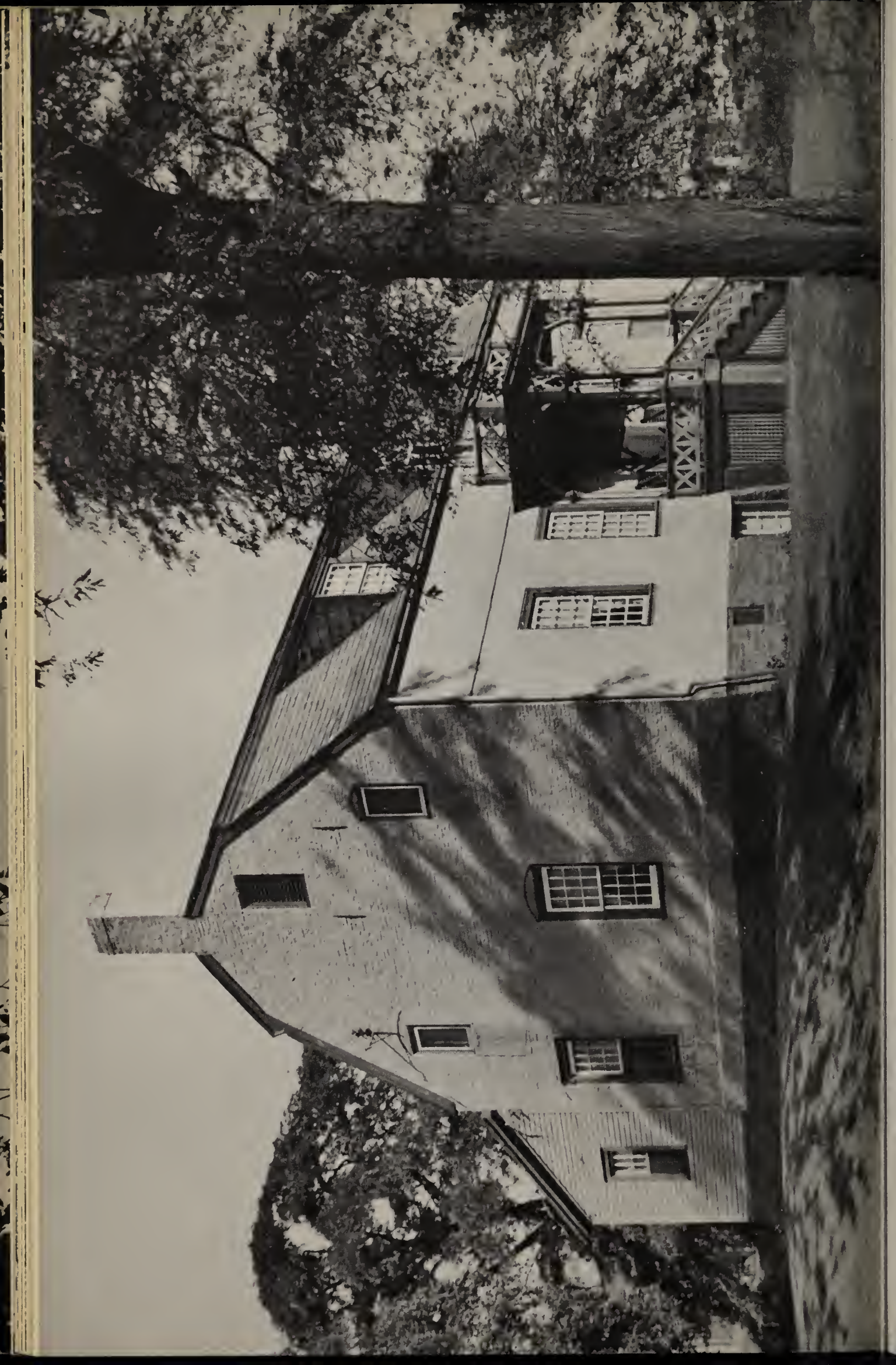
(signed) Nanning Visscher."

On Oct. 29, 1776 "Jacob A. Lansingh was also brought before this Board. Ordered that he appear tomorrow morning and that he be continued under the security he has given."

On Oct. 31st, 1776, "Jacob A. Lansingh was again brought before this Board, and nothing farther appearing against him, ordered that he be liberated from his present restraint and that the security given to this Board for his appearance be and is hereby cancelled."







THE VAN SCHAICK MANSION

COHOES

THIS was the home of Anthony Van Schaick, built in 1755, on a section of the "Half Moon" patent, granted to his father jointly with Philip Pieterse Schuyler on Sept. 11th, 1665. The original patent, confirming an Indian grant, included all the land lying between the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers, and embraced the several islands at this point, which divide the "sprouts" or mouths of the Mohawk River. The site of this house is on one of these, called "Havers Island" ("haver" being Dutch for "oats"). The patent also included the site of the present town of Waterford.

Philip Pieterse Schuyler transferred his interest in the patent to Goosen Gerritsen Van Schaick in 1674. He in turn willed it to his wife, from whom it passed to their son Anthony. The title to this patent was confirmed by Governor Dongan on May 31st, 1687, in consideration of an annual quit rent of one bushel of winter wheat!

When Anthony made his will he made a reservation for the cemetery just at the side of the house, in which five generations of the Van Schaick family now lie; among them are men of distinction in their time. The first Van Schaick, Goosen Gerritsen, was a Hollander who came early to Rensselaerwyck and was a brewer at that place; he never occupied the island. Under the Van Slichtenhorst administration of the Manor in 1651 he was named one of the Magistrates and was evidently an important personage.

When the son Anthony came into possession he had the house built, it is said, with Holland-made brick as facings on the inside and outside of the walls, the space between being filled with brick made on the premises by his slaves. Certainly the walls are unusually heavy.

The arrangement of the house is somewhat different from most other houses of this time, but is not unique, as the Van Cortlandt Manor house at Croton-on-Hudson is built in this same manner. The first floor is, in a sense, a basement with the

main or ground floor a little above this ground level and with still another floor and an attic above this. The original dining room was in a front room of the basement floor with the kitchen adjoining. Most of the baking was done, however, in a small annex.

The main floor is entered at the front through the original horizontally divided front door, giving into a spacious hall which divides the house. On each side are two large rooms with smaller rooms at the rear. Much of the hardware, woodwork and glass is original. The mantel in the front room at the north side is a fine example of hand carving. One of the rooms on the second floor had a small door cut through the exterior wall and over it a beam protruded. To this a hoist was fastened to haul up, for storage, the pelts and other merchandise handled. The door opening has now been filled with brick. Porches have been added at the front and rear of the house and other superficial changes made, but principally it is as originally constructed.

In this house General Schuyler turned over his command to General Gates. Gates, however, refused to accept the command of such an ill-fed, poorly clad army and John G. Van Schaick (the third generation) loaned General Schuyler \$10,000.00 in gold for the purchase of military supplies. In return Schuyler gave Van Schaick Continental script which he signed personally as a Continental officer. It is interesting to note that this script was never redeemed as Congress took the position that Schuyler had no authority to borrow the money. There are three of these script notes now (1940) in the possession of the owner of the house.

The following letter from General Gates to His Excellency George Washington is of interest:

Headquarters,
Van Schaick Island,
August 22, 1777.

Sir,

Upon my arrival in this department I found the main body of the Army encamped upon Van Schaick Island which is made by the sprouts of the Mohawk River joining with the Hudson River nine miles north of Albany. A brigade under General Poor is encamped at Loudon's

Ferry, on the south bank of the Mohawk River, five miles from hence: a brigade under General Lincoln had joined General Stark at Bennington and a brigade under General Arnold marched the 15th inst. to join the militia of Tryon County to raise the siege of Fort Stanwick. Upon leaving Philadelphia, the prospect this way appeared very gloomy, but the severe checks the enemy have met with at Bennington and Tryon County (Oriskany) have given a more pleasing view to public affairs. Particular accounts of the signal victory gained by General Stark and the severe blow General Herkimer gave Sir John Johnson and the scalpers under his command have been transmitted to your Excellency by General Schuyler. I anxiously expect the arrival of an express from General Arnold with an account of the total defeat of the enemy in that quarter. By my calculations he reached Fort Stanwick the day before yesterday. Colonels Livingstone's and Courtland's regiments arrived yesterday and immediately joined General Poor's Division. I shall also order General Arnold, upon his return, to march to that post. I cannot sufficiently thank your Excellency for sending Colonel Morgan's corps to this army. They will be of the greatest service to it, for until the late successes this way I am told the army were quite panic struck by the Indians and their Tory and Canadian assassins in Indian dresses. Horrible indeed have been the cruelties they have wantonly committed upon many of the miserable inhabitants, inasmuch as it is not fair for General Burgoyne, even if the bloody hatchet he has so barbarously used should find its way into his own head. Governor Clinton will be here today. Upon his arrival I shall consult with him and General Lincoln upon the best plan to distress, and I hope, finally defeat the enemy. I am sorry to be necessitated to acquaint your Excellency how neglectful your orders have been executed at Springfield — few of the militia demanded are yet arrived, but I hear of great numbers upon the march. Your Excellency's advice in regard to Morgan's corps, etc. shall be carefully observed. My scouts and spies inform me that the enemy headquarters and main body are at Saratoga, and that

lately they have been repairing the bridges between that place and Stillwater. As soon as time and circumstances will admit, I shall send your Excellency a general return of this army.

I am, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient humble servant.

(Signed) HORATIO GATES.

His Excellency, General Washington.

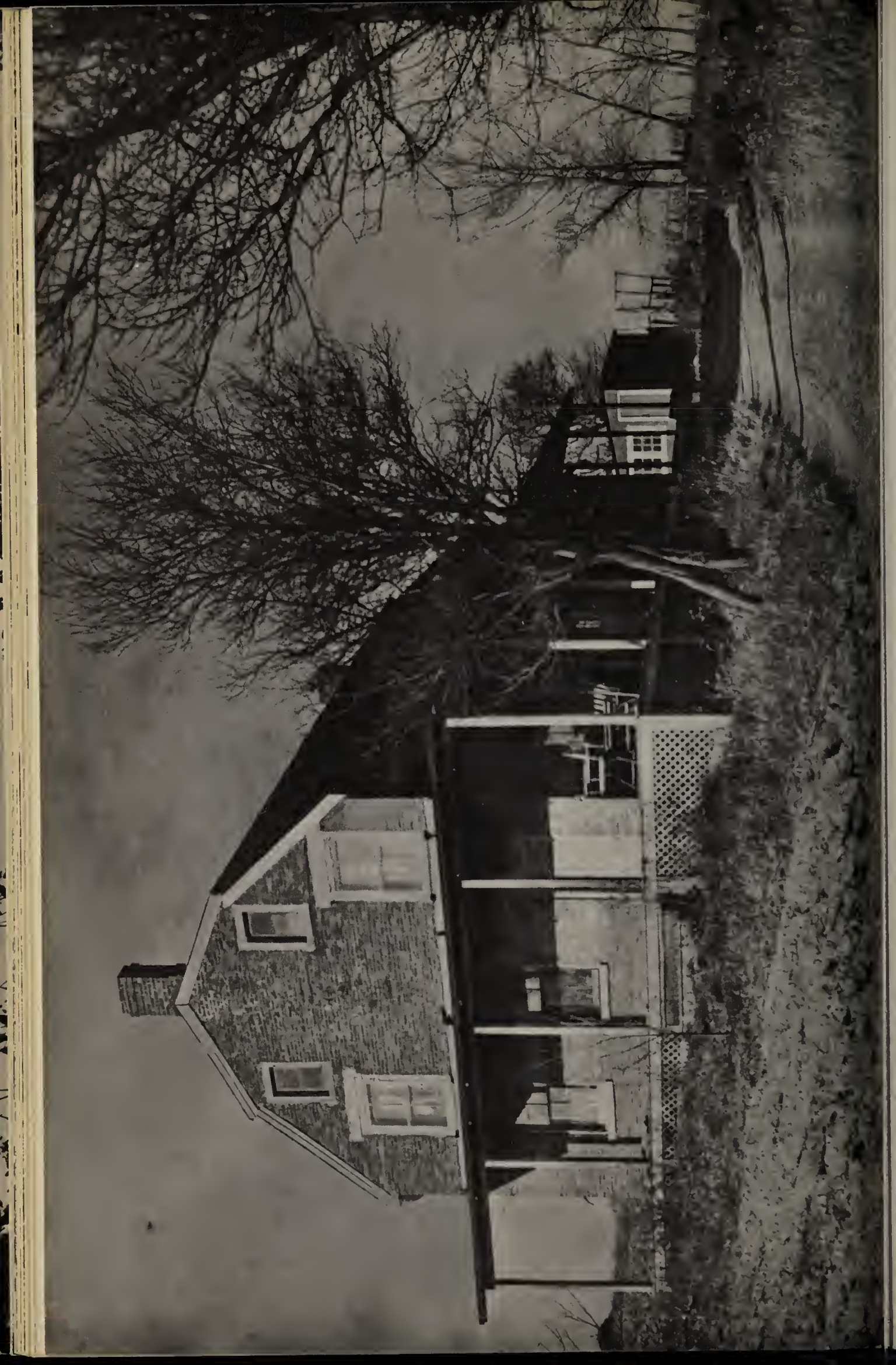
At the time of the transfer of the command it is said that Gates was so unpopular with the soldiers it was necessary for Governor Clinton to come to Camp Van Schaick and order the troops to obey their newly appointed Commander. This was from August 22nd to 25th, 1777, just preceding Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga. An interesting memento of that decisive battle is one of the guns on the lawn at the side of the house. Following its capture the gun was brought down to the Mohawk and lost overboard from the ferry in crossing. Later it was found and brought here. It is easily identified by the British coat-of-arms it bears.

The location of the Revolutionary camp was at the top of the hill, just behind the house, and it was from this place that Learned's brigade, under the command of Benedict Arnold, went to the aid of Colonel Peter Gansevoort at Fort Schuyler (Stanwix) at what is now Rome. Katrina Van Schaick must have been intensely concerned with the ultimate success or failure of this expedition, for it was going to the relief of her lover. She and Colonel Gansevoort were later married in this house.





*Flag Carried by General Peter Gansevoort's Regiment at Yorktown, Used
in Designing the New York State Coat of Arms*



FONDA-LANSING HOUSE

COHOES

THE greater part of what is now the City of Cohoes was embraced within the limits of the Manor of Rensselaer as purchased by the Patroon from the Indians in 1630. Subsequent purchases extended his holdings until they reached southward on both sides of the Hudson River a distance of twenty-four miles from the northern boundary, which was the Cohoes Falls of the Mohawk River.

The adjoining landowner on the north was Hilletie Van Slyke Van Olinda, whose land was given to her by the Mohawk Indians. She was a half breed Mohawk herself, her father being Cornelis Antonissen, commonly known as "Broer Cornelis," and her mother Otstoch, an Indian "princess." Broer Cornelis is said to have been living in the vicinity of the Cohoes Falls in 1640, later moving to Schenectady. Hilletie came into possession of this land in 1667, the southern boundary of which was the Manor Avenue Road which extends westward from the Falls. This tract of land was commonly known as the "Boght" (Dutch for "bend") and lies between the River and Manor Avenue, being embraced by the curve which the Mohawk River forms in its northerly then southerly course just before reaching the Falls.

A map of the Manor of Rensselaer made in 1767 by a surveyor named Bleeker includes this bit of land and on it he shows five houses. Also just south of the boundary, on Manor land, are located five other houses designated as the farms of Hans Lansing, William Liverse, Douw Fonda, Frans Lansing and Cornelius Van Den Berg (alias King). These last mentioned lay roughly in a north and south line and in the order given, beginning with the northernmost, along the Loudon Road. This road led to the ferry above the Falls while the original or military road leading to the northern lakes crossed below the Falls by fording the several mouths of the Mohawk, making use of the islands that lay between the shallow channels.

Of these five Boght homes, for they were so-called even though they lay just outside the Van Olinda boundary, three

remain standing today. Those within the Boght proper have disappeared. Perhaps the most interesting of the surviving buildings is the house built by Douw Fonda in 1760. It is easily seen from Columbia Street, Cohoes, and is identified by a State marker. There have been a good many occupants in this old house though apparently but three owners. The title passed from Douw Fonda to James Lansing and is now held by the Simmons Estate. These three houses have much in common. All are of substantial brick construction and characteristic of the period. The Fonda house has an interesting gambrel roof, while its walls are laid up with the brick in English bond, which alternates the placement, exposing the long side, then the short end to the weather. There is a central hall with stairway leading to the second story from just inside the front entrance. A basement or cellar underlies the house. These cellars played a very important part in the housekeeping of that day for here was stored a full winter's supply of vegetables, meats, sausages, cider, beer, and all else that required a temperature cool but not freezing. The windows were of the 24-pane variety then in common use.

James Lansing, the second owner, was never popularly known as "James" but rather as "Buttermilk," after his chief commodity, though he did sell butter, eggs and vegetables as well. This nickname was a mark of distinction and served to set him apart from the large number of Lansings who lived in and about Cohoes. Perhaps because it did accomplish this so satisfactorily it went with him to his grave.

The old Boght Dutch Church stood but a quarter of a mile north of this house. All traces of it are long gone; however the present Boght Church is of interest and boasts a collection of local family records.

This locality was off the main trade route up the Mohawk, since the River below Schenectady was but little used for commerce because of the Falls and the rapids below them. Then too, the "carry" from Schenectady to Albany, the chief shipping point, was but the longer side of a triangle, while the Cohoes Falls formed the central point of the other two sides. However, the route from Albany northward to Lake George, Lake Champlain and Canada passed just to the east of the Boght. At an

early date, before there was much local settlement, it was natural the trail should have led across the river at its shallow fording places below the Falls. But as settlement was established the ferry across the quiet deep water above the Falls became the customary road, being less toilsome. It is of interest to note that Colonel Henry Knox made use of both roads in his difficult undertaking of transporting heavy cannon from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston in the mid-winter of 1775-76.

Just what part these Boght settlers played in this epic task of moving heavy armament over snow-choked roads on inadequate sleds can perhaps never be retold, but we can be certain the men who built these houses "put their shoulder to the wheel" in a very literal sense.

The idea originated with Colonel Knox and was immediately approved by General Washington as seen from the following extract from his letter:

"The need of them (heavy cannon) is so great that no trouble or expense must be spared to obtain them. * * *

I have given you a warrant to the Paymaster-General of the Continental Army for a thousand dollars to defray the expense attending your journey."

Colonel Knox left New York on horseback Nov. 28th, 1775, and "stay'd at Albany" on Dec. 2nd. The 3rd of December he covered the 35 miles to Saratoga (Schuylerville) and reached Fort George, 30 miles across the country at the south end of Lake George, on the afternoon of the 4th. On the 5th he reached Fort Ticonderoga and immediately started loading boats to take his cannon and ammunition up Lake George to Fort George. Fortunately the lake had not yet frozen.

On Dec. 20th the "artillery train" left Fort George on sleds favored with a fresh and heavy fall of snow. Much difficulty was encountered in the constant breaking down of the sleds and in getting across the streams. The Hudson in particular presented difficulties for they were compelled to cross or recross it four times.

Colonel Knox preceded the "train" to Albany in snows through which he found it impossible to ride a horse and so was compelled to tramp a part of the distance as best he could. At

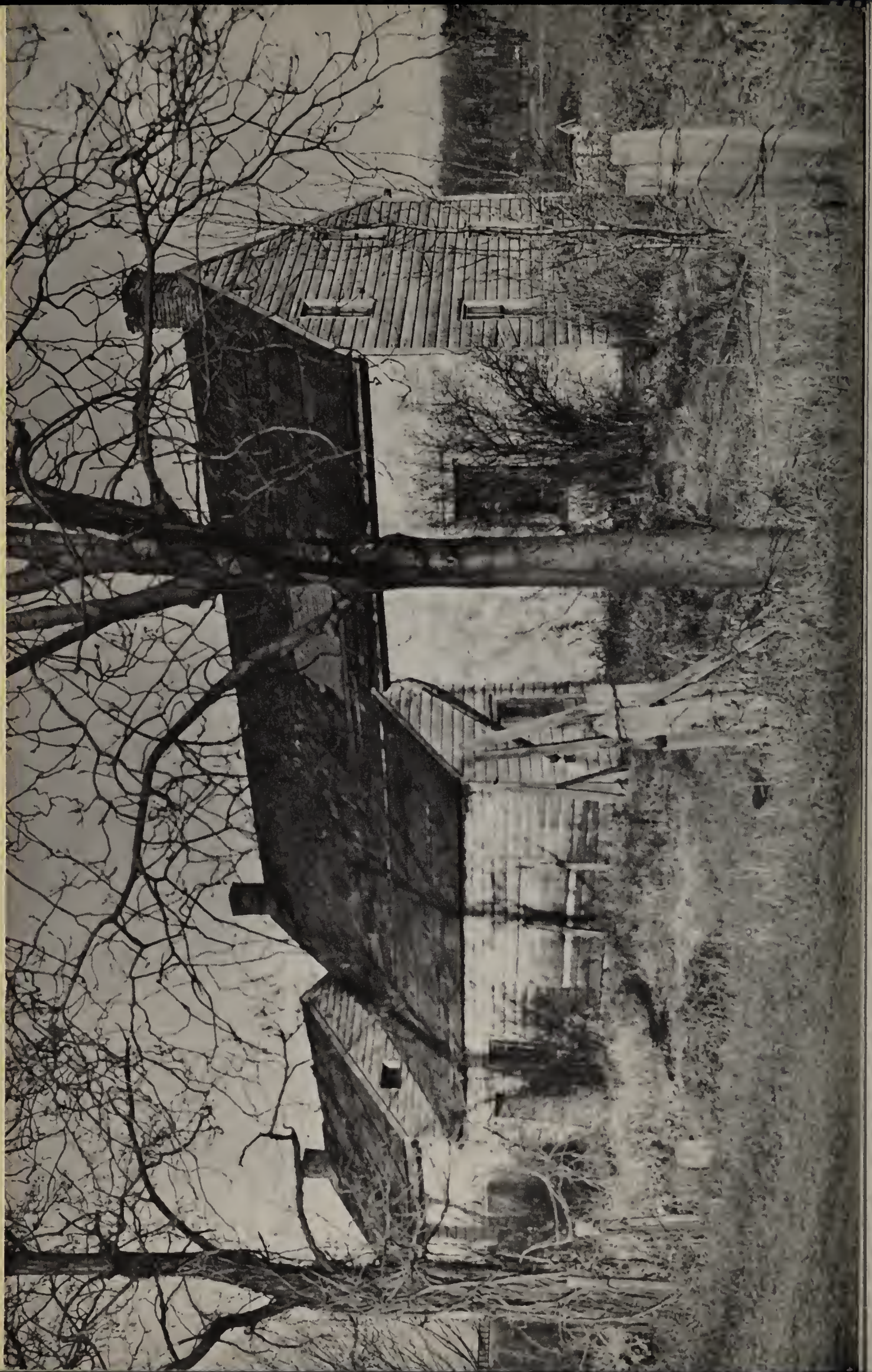
Albany he conferred with General Schuyler, from whom he obtained much valuable cooperation. Returning to Waterford he learned that "one of the largest cannon" had fallen through the ice in crossing the river at this point. The others had then been taken to "Sloss' (Claus'?)" ferry for crossing, where all were safely taken over. From there they proceeded to Albany. It was from Albany that Colonel Knox wrote his wife: "Albany from its situation and commanding the trade of the water and the immense territories westward, must one day be, if not the capitol, yet nearly to it, of America. . . ."

Eleven sleds loaded with cannon were taken across the frozen Hudson at Albany and all but the last reached the east bank in safety. This last one, however, broke through. After some difficulty it was recovered and continued on its journey. The advance guard of the "train" reached Cambridge (Boston) on January 24th after endless delays and discouragements, sometimes due to lack of sleds, of horses or oxen, or often to extremes of weather. There seems to have been a sufficiency of man power which was recruited along the line of travel. These patriot farmers were impressed with the daring and the magnitude of the idea of fighting a way through almost three hundred miles of forest and stream with roads little more than trails, and all in the dead of winter.

The task Colonel Knox had expected to accomplish in about eighteen days had required almost two months. But the effort was crowned with success for these heavy cannon from old Fort Ticonderoga were instrumental in forcing General Howe to evacuate Boston.




KNOX ENTERING CAMP WITH ARTILLERY.



THE TYMERSON HOUSE

NISKAYUNA

NFORTUNATELY but little is known of this old house and old it is, judging by its many "earmarks." It is certainly pre-Revolutionary.

It is a small house much after the pattern of the very well known Mabie House at Rotterdam. But the Mabie House is largely of stone while this house is a combination of frame, brick, and brick-filled walls.

There is a cellar under the entire house and a main or ground floor with an attic above. The cellar is divided about equally into two rooms by a ponderous stone wall. Here are seen the unusually heavy floor beams, hand hewn to square fourteen inches and the heavy foundations and arches for the support of the large fireplaces above. These arch supports are typical of houses of a pre-Revolutionary date.

The ground floor consists of a central hall on each side of which is a single room with its old-fashioned fireplace. The originally exposed beams in these rooms have been hidden by lath and plaster but this is not true in the hall where the beams have not been molested. Another note of interest is the horizontally divided front door after the Dutch manner, with its hand wrought hardware. The house was never "elegant" but must have been considered rather more than a "substantial" home in its day.

The attic discloses considerable carpentering of a date much later than that of the building. The entire house is in a poor state of repair and there is more than an even chance it will not stand many years longer unless greater care is given it.

The original farm which extended northward and eastward to the river has been largely condemned and flooded by the State of New York in the creation of the "Niskayuna Pool" or flood-water storage basin, an adjunct of the State Barge Canal. Being low-lying "bottom" land, it was a rich and desirable farm and must have produced abundantly. This rich land was the lode-stone of the first settlers.

The Tymerson family were among the earliest of the Niskayuna settlers. The original settler of the Tymerson name was Cornelis, who came to Albany and there married Martie Ysbrantse. In 1713 she willed to the Dutch Church in Albany the sum of £20 for the benefit of the poor of the Church. But it is known that this couple took up residence in Niskayuna. There is a reference by the Indians to a Cornelis Tymerson of "Rosendale" in 1701, "Rosendale" being a locality in the Niskayuna district.

There were at least two children to the above union, Tymen and Eldert. The latter, born December 13th, 1691, married Hester, daughter of Bastian Vischer of Albany, and settled in Niskayuna.

Seven children were baptized from this union, four in Albany and three in Schenectady. Two of those baptized in Schenectady on February 7th, 1718, were twins named Bastian and Peter. It seems probable this Peter did not live, for another son Peter was baptized in Schenectady in 1722.

In 1767 a map of Niskayuna was made by a surveyor named John R. Bleeker. This map located nine families in the Rosendale neighborhood, but the Tymerson name is not among them. This is possibly explained by the fact that Peter Tymerson married Geertruy Criegee and both were listed as of "Canastagoone" or Niskayuna. The "Criegees" were an earlier family and it is possible the Tymerson interests were included in the Criegee tract. The Criegee grant was dated about 1686, the first settler of this name being Captain Martin Krygiee who was the first burgomaster of New Amsterdam. He retired to Niskayuna and died there on his estate about 1712.

Bastian married Mayke Ouderkirk in Albany in 1743 and to them were born children in 1744, 1746, 1747 and 1750 to whom were given the name of "Eldert." This was customary when children so christened did not live. There were also three daughters and a son, Johannes.

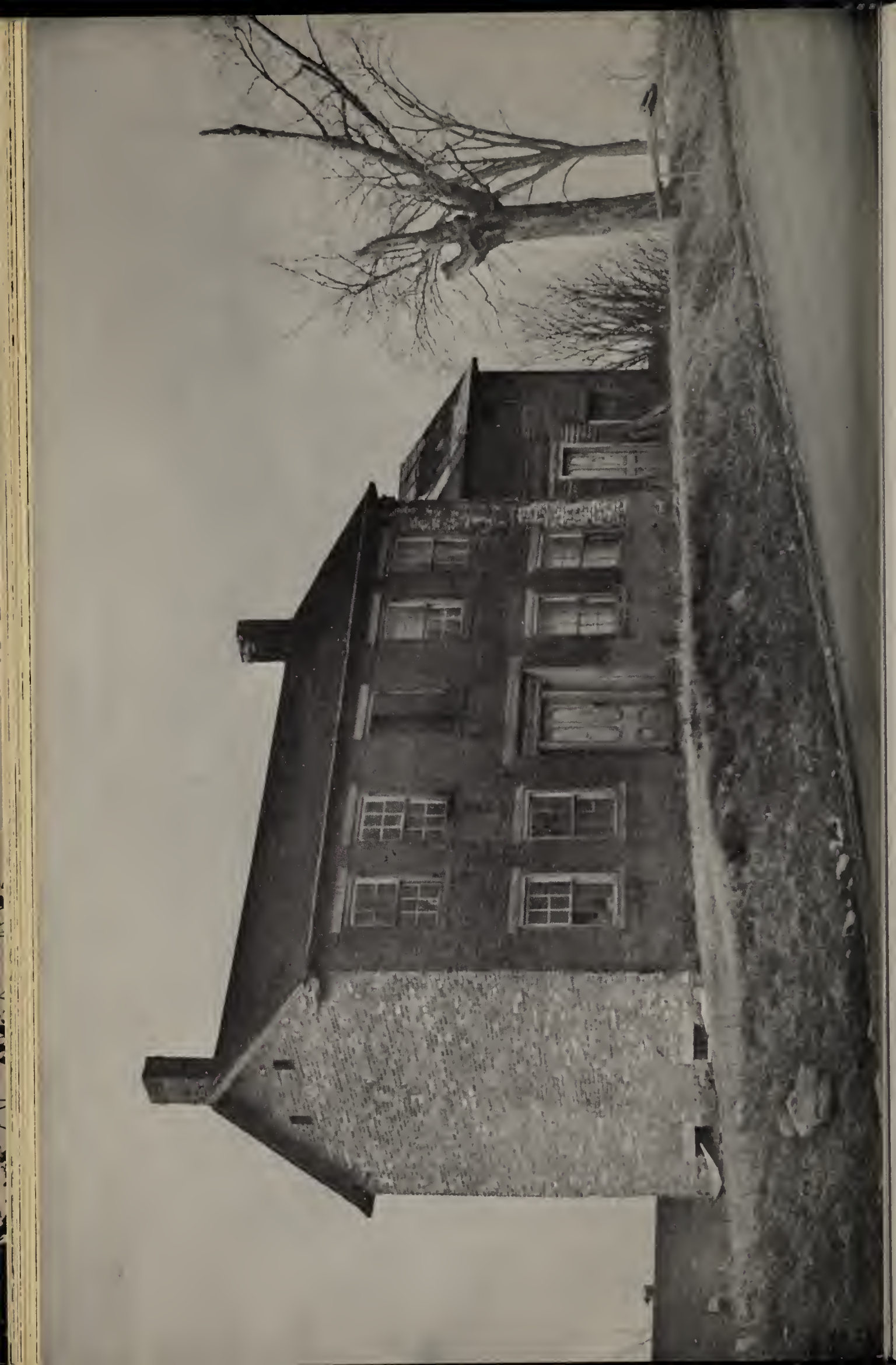
The surviving Eldert, son of "Bastian of Nestoungjoone" married Catalyntje, daughter of Jan Baptiste Van Eps of Schenectady, on December 10, 1774. Their children were Bastian born 1775, Jan Baptiste born 1777, Mayke born 1780, Isaac born 1782, Maria born 1789 and Peter born 1794. The marriage

records of Rev. John Toll, who lived at Beukendael just west of Schenectady, mention the marriage of Isaac Tymerson of Niskayuna to Cornelia Van Evera of Canajoharie on December 18th, 1803. These marriage records are now filed at Fort Johnson, Amsterdam.

The Albany Committee of Safety refers to Cornelius Tymer-son as being a member from the Half Moon District (which included Niskayuna) and shows him present at its first meeting held Jan. 24th, 1775. He is also mentioned as being present at three subsequent meetings held in that year as well as at the meeting of March 29th, 1776.


The Federal Census of 1790 mentions four families of this name: two at Watervliet and two at Canajoharie. Those at Canajoharie were the families of Eldert and Peter.





STEVENS HOMESTEAD

ALPLAUS

 HE first settler of this name in Schenectady was Jonathan S. Stevens, who as a young man came to the locality from New England in company with a man named Thomas Smith about 1690. Little seems to have been recorded regarding Smith; possibly he soon moved away. But Jonathan Stevens founded a family that was to leave its name largely written across the pages of early Schenectady history.

His town lot was on the north side of State Street just east of the present Barney Company store, and extended northward to and beyond Liberty Street, not then cut through, comprising in all more than an acre of ground. His farm of several hundred acres was on the opposite side of the Mohawk, its eastern boundary Ael Plaats (Alplaus) Creek. He also leased from the Widow DeGraff a tract of land on the Fourth Flat, as it was then called, being the bottom lands along the north shore of the river about four miles west of the city.

On July 24th, 1693, he married Lea, the widow of Claas Willemse Van Coppernoll, who had died the previous year. She was the daughter of Cornelis Antonissen Van Slyke, better known as "Broer Cornelis," of whom more has been said in connection with the Van Slyck House. This Lea was a remarkable woman, noted for her beauty and piety. She was a half-breed Mohawk and because of this fact was always generously dealt with by the Indians. Her sister, Hilletie, who married Peter Danielse Van Olinda, an original Schenectady settler of 1662, was also noted for her beauty, as well as her Christian character. Both of them appear frequently in the records of the settlement as interpreters and witnesses to deeds and other papers, as well as in the early church records, acting as assistants to the Dutch ministers in their missionary work among the Indians. These sisters were the joint owners of the "Great Island" at Niskayuna, which was a gift to them from the Indians.

Being English and marrying a part Indian woman, it is only natural that the Stevens family should be found closely allied

with Sir William Johnson, English agent who had "married" several Indian women. Later members of the Stevens family were divided in their opinions; some of them espoused the cause of the Colonies and others remained Royalists or Tories at the time of the Revolution. The date of old Jonathan's death does not seem to have come down to us but it is known he was born in 1675.

Jonathan and Lea had four children. Of the sons, named Hendricus and Arent, the first mentioned moved to New York and so out of the picture. Both daughters married and settled in Schenectady.

The younger son, Arent, born July 26th, 1702, is prominently mentioned for a period following 1725. He is described as a "master hand with the Indians," which is logical enough in view of what has been said regarding his mother. He was much in the employ of Sir William Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Crown, who found him immensely valuable in furthering the Johnson influence. Arent lived for some time at Canajoharie among the Indians and one rather imagines this was in keeping with Sir William's ideas. Whenever anything of unusual importance was brewing, Arent was more than likely to be a party to it, for he acted as confidential agent for Sir William and always thoroughly honored the trust and confidence placed in him.

Arent married twice, the first wife being Maritie, a daughter of William Hall of Schenectady, whom he wed in 1726. She died in 1739 and ten years later he married Mary Griffiths, the widow of Lieutenant Thomas Burroughs of the British Army. He lived nine years after their marriage, dying in 1758. To these marriages there were six sons and four daughters.

Jonathan, the eldest son, born in 1726, was killed fighting under Col. William Johnson at the Battle of Lake George. This was the disastrous ambush in which King Hendrick, Chief Sachem of the Mohawks and loyal supporter of Sir William Johnson, lost his life. Colonel Ephriam Williams, founder of Williams College, was also killed in this engagement. A monument in memory of Col. Williams stands at the roadside near "Bloody Pond," the scene of the ambush. In the Battleground State Park at Lake George a monument to Sir William and King Hendrick

overlooks the scene of their victory. Young Jonathan Stevens was unmarried and but 28 years of age at the time of his death; according to Sir William's report of the battle, he died "fighting like a lion."

The other sons of Arent were William, Nicholas, John, James, and Richard. Of these, John and William are mentioned in the records of the Schenectady Committee of Safety as "fire wardens." William was also a Second Lieutenant in the Third Schenectady Company of Militia.

Nicholas, the third son, was a Tory. He refused to take the Oath of Allegiance tendered him by the Committee of Safety and after some little time was finally removed to the enemy's lines.

The census of 1790 shows the following "Stevens" living at Schenectady Town, north of the river, which would probably refer to the homestead at the Ael Platz:

Jannatie Stevens	—	2 males	—	3 females	—	no slaves
Jonathan Stevens	—	1 male	—	2 females	—	no slaves
William Stevens	—	10 males	—	5 females	—	1 slave

This "Jannatie" was evidently Jennetje De Spitzer, who had married on November 20th, 1768, Arent, the elder son of Hendricus, the eldest son of old Jonathan, as there were no children born of the Stevens name whose given name was "Jannatie."

The "Jonathan" mentioned must have been the son of Arent, the eldest son of Hendricus, for old Jonathan would have been dead long since, and the other Jonathan, as stated, was killed at Lake George.

The original house Jonathan and Lea built in 1693, the year of their marriage, stood on the river bank just below the present house. It is said to have had an underground passage connecting it with a hidden entrance at the river's edge, affording secret ingress and egress in time of trouble. The old house was taken down in 1860, as it had become a shelter for obnoxious characters who came to it off the river. Some of the brick and timbers taken from it were used in the present house which was built about 1869 and which is evidently the third of the Stevens houses as there is mention of a house located on the same site which had been previously burned. Among the Stevens papers is mention

of the purchase of brick and also of household effects about 1800, which might perhaps have gone into the second house.

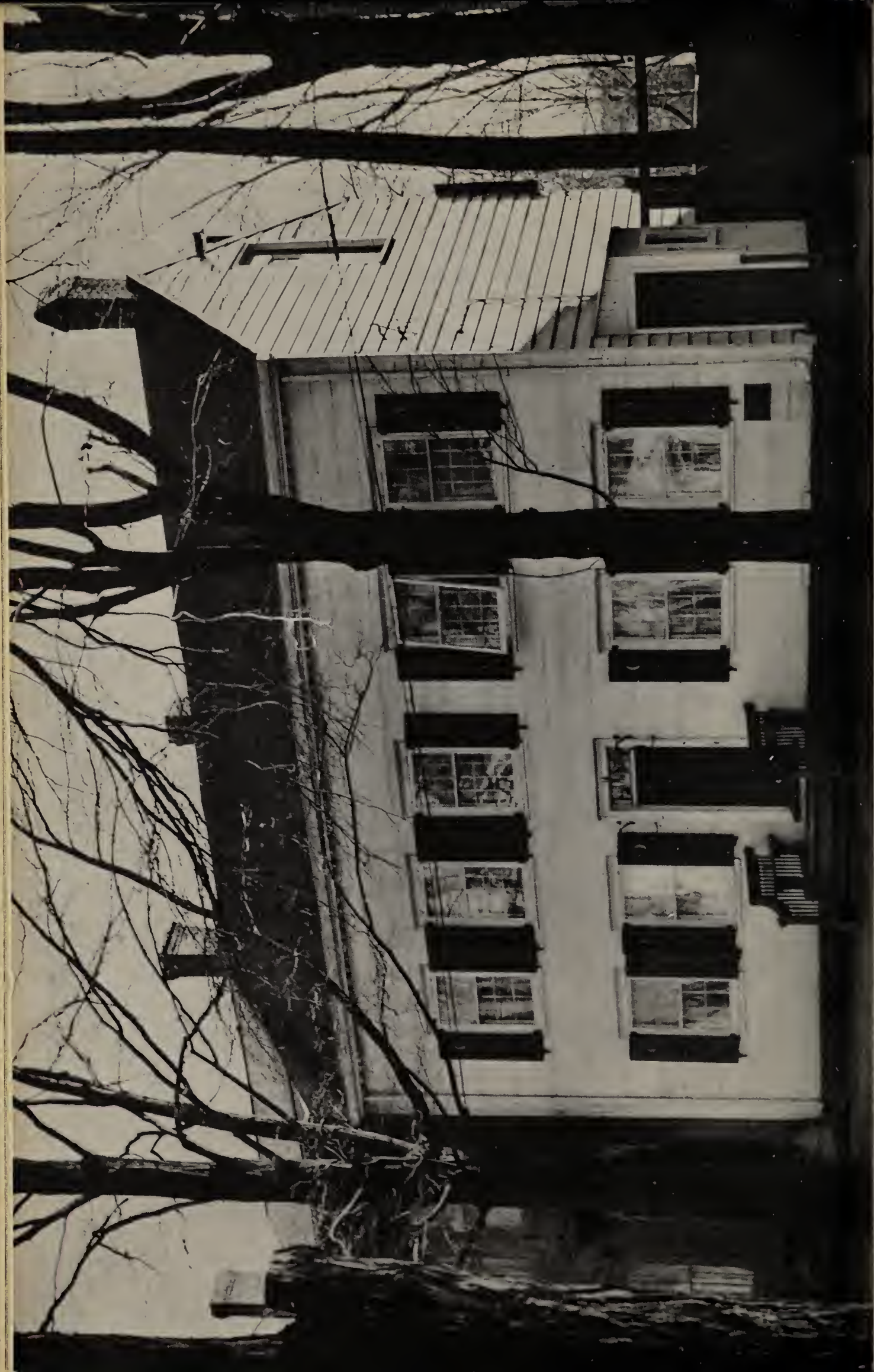
The present structure certainly cannot be classed as a pre-Revolutionary house, yet much of the material that went into its walls pre-dates the Revolution by nearly a century. And the land upon which it stands had served this family for nearly two centuries as a homestead, lately passing out of their hands. Judging from appearances, the present owners are not interested in preserving the old house, and beyond a doubt within a few years it will be torn down or, becoming untenable through neglect, fall down, and another landmark will have disappeared. Its present condition rather suggests the latter alternative.*

* Since this was written the house has been demolished.





FROM AN OIL PAINTING DEPICTING THE BURNING
AND MASSACRE OF FEBRUARY, 1690



BROUWER-ROSA HOUSE

SCHENECTADY

THIS house bears a tablet on which is inscribed in part: "Oldest house in City built before 1700 by Hendrick Brouwer, a fur trader, who died here 1707. Sold 1799, to James Rosa, Superintendent of Mohawk and Hudson Railroad, 1831."

In looking over the early records of the settlement, a possibility of confusion arises through an earlier settlement in Schenectady of a Philip Hendrickse Brouwer. In fact, he was one of the original settlers in 1662. But as his house and lot were on the northwest corner of Church and State Streets and as he died about 1664 without issue, the line ends abruptly, and does not concern us.

Philip had come to Schenectady from Albany, where also lived a brother, named Willem. This Willem must have been an interesting character judging from the number of times his name appears on the minutes of the court. But be it said to his credit he appeared not always as a defendant. Many of his appearances were made for the purposes of collecting accounts for beer sold. Upon one occasion, however, he seems to have had a serious mix-up. From a "blotter" entry of August 4th, 1660, it appears he did "during the night, in returning from guard duty, cut Gerrit Visbeeck with his cutlas in the arm in such a way that the same was half off and lamed as appears from the affidavits of three witnesses."

It seems impossible to get the complete story, but Herr Brouwer's defense was that while he "admitted the deed," he also says that the plaintiff attempted to take his gun away from him.

Willem Brouwer died in Albany in 1668, — as shown by an entry in the Albany Dutch Church records which reads: "fl. 40: 15 paid for the burial of William Brouwer and fl. 5 his widow."

His son Hendrick settled in Schenectady prior to 1700 and owned the property on which he built the present "Brouwer-Rosa" house at 14 North Church Street.

The lot was described as being in possession of his heirs in 1708 (he having died in 1707) and beginning 108 feet north of the church lot on the east side of the street and probably including the remainder of the block, being bounded on the north by what is now Front Street, which at that time cut across the north end of this block, to intersect Ferry Street near St. George's Church.

Following is a copy of Hendrick Brouwer's will. The original document is on file in the Court of Appeals, Albany:

"In the name of God, Amen. I, Hendrick Brouwer, at Schenectade, at present in my full senses and understanding, but weak in body, acknowledge this to be my last will and Testament.

First my wife, Maritje shall possess my entire Estate, real and personal, during her lifetime and in case she should marry again an inventory shall be taken of all my property and my wife shall beholden to give security for the same, in order that after her decease the same shall go to my children, my wife's son Benjamin by a former marriage to share equally with my children: except that my son Johannes shall receive ten pounds in advance for his birth right because he is my eldest son. I commend my body to the earth whence it came and request a decent burial. I acknowledge this to be my last will and Testament and have signed and sealed this with my own hand.

Schonht, the 12th of December, 1706.

HENDRICK BROUWER

(Seal) Witnesses:

Philip Scheyler

Martin Van Beuthuis

The mark J. G. of Jess D'Graf."

Hendrick's wife was Maritie Borsboom, widow of Teunis Cartense (1660-1691) who came to Schenectady about 1680. In the spring, following his death, she married Hendrick Brouwer. This was but two years after the massacre. By him she had six sons and two daughters. Jacob, one of these sons, was brutally murdered by Indians in 1730 at the falls of the Oswego River. As Hendrick came to Schenectady, probably

without funds, and became an Indian trader, which took him into the wilderness a great deal, it seems likely he did not build this house until the time of his marriage (1692). He is not mentioned either as a victim or as a survivor of the massacre of 1690, and no property of his is mentioned as being either destroyed or saved. The homestead seems to have come into the possession of Cornelius, a son of Hendrick, by 1737. This he occupied until his death in 1765 when it passed to his son Hendrick. This Hendrick lived here until his death in 1801, when he willed it to his son Hendrick who sold it to James Rosa in 1825. The sale date given on the marker attached to the house seems incorrect.

There was a Hendrick Brouwer Junior (1731-1801), a grandson of the first Hendrick, who signed the call of the Dutch Church which brought Domine Vrooman to Schenectady in 1753; he served in the Revolutionary War as a member of the Albany County Militia. There was also a Richard Brouwer, a member of the Schenectady Regiment at the same time. At a meeting of the Schenectady Committee of Correspondence, held on February 7th, 1776, a Jelles Brouwer was appointed with Adam Cundee to notify certain men "to appear in town on Saturday the 10th instant at 10 o'clock forenoon, for the purpose of choosing their respective officers."

The Federal Census of 1790 lists a Jellis Brouwer whose family consisted of a wife, two daughters, and three sons. This is "Gillis," son of Peter, son of Hendrick, the original settler. Gillis' wife was Maria Bradt, a daughter of Harmanus, who lived in the old State Street gable-ender and whose second wife was Aeffie Brouwer, daughter of Hendrick, who died at the Church Street house in 1801. There is also mentioned a Henry Brouwer, who had three sons, a daughter, and one slave. Both these families were living at Schenectady.

James Rosa, who became the owner in 1825, was the son of Isaac Rosa, whose forbears were settlers of Ulster County. The original settler there, of this name, was Heymense Rosa, an emigrant from Gelderland, Holland, who came to America on the ship "Spotted Cow" in 1661. He was a person of importance at Esopus where he settled, and, in 1661, was appointed one of a group of commissioners to enclose the new village near by, called Hurley. Heymanse died at Hurley in 1679 leaving a widow and

ten sons, the first eight of whom were born in Holland. The second oldest son named Heyman lived at Esopus and Hurley and married Margurite Roosevelt. Geysbert, their oldest son, married Greetyje Bond of Schenectady in 1695.

Jan, the eldest son of Geysbert, married first a Van Kamper in 1725 and a son from this union named Isaac married Maria Van Vranken in Albany in 1763. It was their son James, born in 1778, who in 1825 bought the Brouwer house which remained in the Rosa family for a century and a quarter. His was a large and prominent Schenectady family. He married three times and had thirteen children.

The exterior appearance of the house as viewed from the street is interesting but not typically "Dutch." The siding is unusual, being a foot in width and 1½ inches thick; the boards are carefully fitted together to form a surface as smooth as a floor. The rear view discloses the fact that many changes and additions have been made. From this viewpoint, the characteristic, steeply pitched roof is seen on what appears to be a wing, but which, after an inspection of the interior, proves to be the original building. The house has many interesting features, such as secret closets and hide-away rooms, false partitions, and floors. While in appearance it is a frame building, it is in a sense a brick building as well, for between the inside and outside walls is a brick lining making what is termed a brick-filled wall.

One of the earliest Brouwers to leave the Albany district, which included Schenectady, was William of Schenectady, who moved to the Stone Arabia Patent in the Palatine District soon after its settlement about 1721. This William was the only brother of Hendrick, who remained in Schenectady and became the progenitor of the Schenectady branch.

William's deed is a quit claim direct from the Trustees of the Patent dated September 1st, 1734. He bought of Hendrick Schremling, one of the original settlers of the Stone Arabia Patent, 450 acres on December 10, 1739. His will is dated 1757 and probated 1765. By its terms his sons Arent and Harmanus inherited the "lands where I now live, farming tools and livestock" and among his five daughters he distributed his household goods and money. The will continues: "To Arent (his eldest son) I give my large iron kettle and my negro man named

Thom." Also, "75 acres with the buildings on it, I give to Arent, he to help Harmen build, erect and finish my dwelling house, kitchen and barn."

This old farm has never been out of the family, being conveyed by will from father to son. The house, partially destroyed during one of the Tory raids, was repaired and has been continuously occupied by the Brouwers since that time. It is located a short distance southeast of the Stone Arabia Churches.

To the rear of the house is a large oak tree which was standing at the time of the Revolution. There is a family legend that the Mohawk Indians held their pow-wows under its shade.

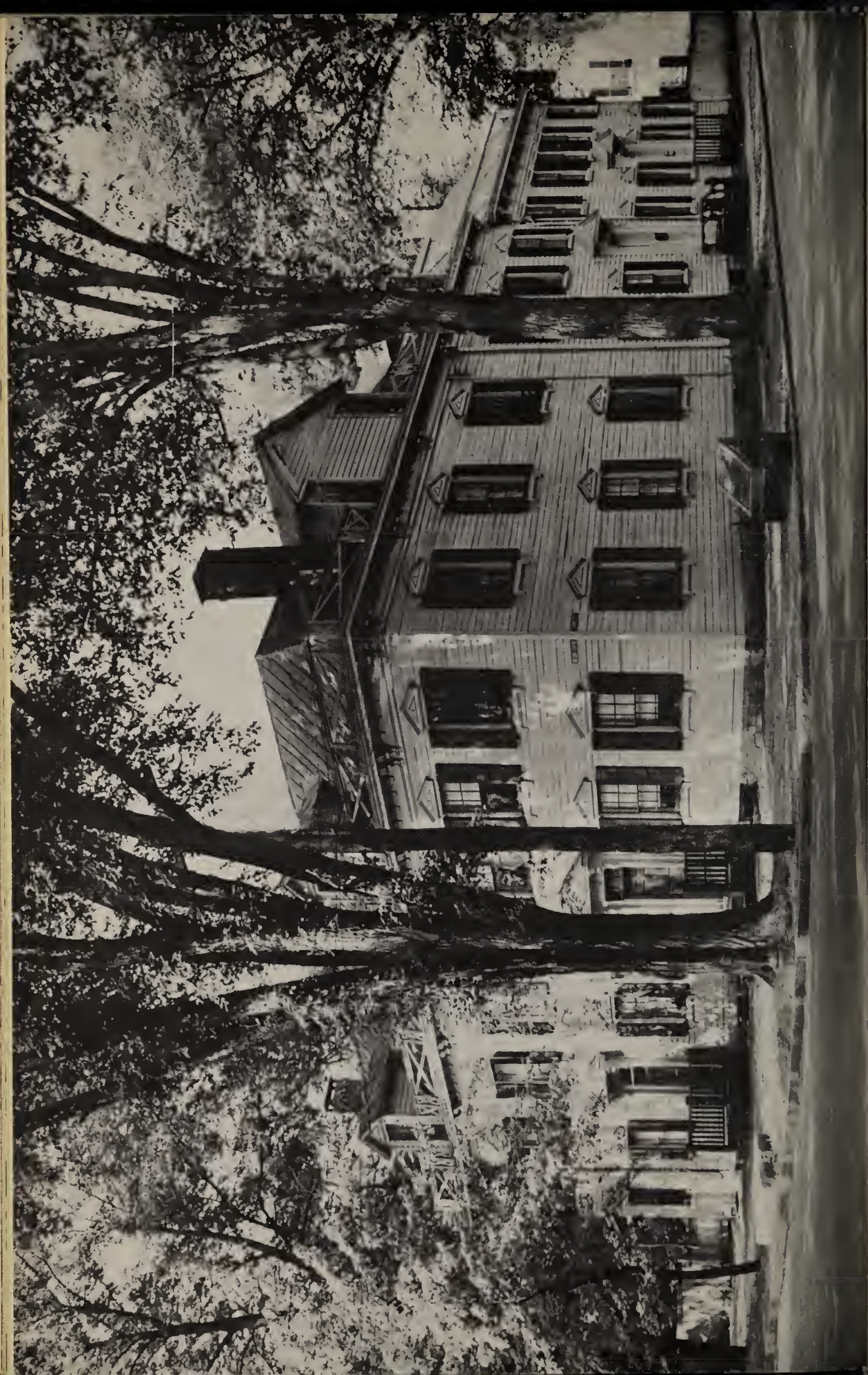
Another branch of the Brouwer family, this one identified with the history of Utica, begins with Abram Giles who was educated at the Schenectady Lyceum, a famous old school formerly located at the corner of Union and Yates Street. From there Abram Giles went to the Albany Medical College. He later married Jennie Helen Vedder and moved to Utica, where, after practicing two years he entered business with his father-in-law. His parents were Giles (1815-1861) who in 1833 married Ellen Vrooman (1817-1867).

Mr. Vedder Brouwer, a direct descendant in this line, recently deceased at Utica, had many valuable records and possessions of the early Mohawk Dutch families. Among them were the old Coat of Arms of the Vrooman family and an original painting of Barent Vrooman, the sixth minister of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church at Schenectady.




THE BATEAU

In the early ship commerce; this type of boat succeeded the canoe



FULLER HOUSE

SCHENECTADY

HE house occupying the southwest corner of the intersection of Front and Church Streets in Schenectady is not pre-Revolutionary; it was built in 1792 by Jeremiah Fuller. But some of the material that went into it, the ground on which it stands, the man who built it, and the previous owners of the site are all so intimately connected with the history of the settlement that it seems unwise not to include it with buildings whose age is perhaps but twenty years greater.

It has been said that the allotment made to Van Curler as leader of the original band of settlers probably included the entire east half of the block which fronts Church Street on the west. It is known that his house stood at the south end of the block on the corner of the present Union Street. But since this allotment was made in 1662 and the Widow Maria Peek was living here in 1670, it was perhaps never built upon until she occupied it. She came here with her son Jacobus during 1670 and he lived for a time with her until he could occupy his land located on the south side of the Mohawk at the Woestina, which he is credited with settling also in 1670.

There is a patent covering this lot issued May 4th, 1718, to Adam Vrooman which conveys

“a lot in Schenectady fronting the street eastward that leads from the Fort to the River 97 feet, and abutting the lot of Gerritt Syminse (Veeder) southward 97 feet and abutting the lot of Simon Groot, Jr. westward 144 feet, all Dutch wood measure together with houses and brewhouse.”

This patent was confirmatory as Adam Vrooman is known to have been in possession before 1690, the date of the massacre, at which time so much property together with records and titles were destroyed that the Trustees issued new deeds confirming ownership.

From 1690 (how much earlier is not known), Adam Vrooman possessed the property, selling to Pieter Quackenbos in 1718, which was about the time Vrooman removed to his lands in the Schoharie Valley. Pieter Quackenbos is described in the mortgage deed he gave to Philip Livingston as a brickmaker. Somehow Quackenbos must have lost the property, for there is a later deed from Adam Vrooman to Adam Conde, his grandson, and in turn from Adam Conde to his son-in-law, Adrian Van Slyke.

On March 29th, 1792, Van Slyke deeded the property to Jeremiah Fuller for a consideration of 300 pounds. The buildings thereon were taken down and the present residence constructed, using much of the dismantled buildings, all in the year of purchase. The Hon. John Sanders, writing in 1879, tells of inspecting the reconstructed house in the company of the then owner, General William K. Fuller, saying:

"I saw with my own eyes the timbers of Vrooman's identical house, darkened by age, but perfectly sound and bearing in several places the mortice marks of previous use."

The Fuller family have continued in ownership up to the present day, rounding out a full century and a half.

When the group of original proprietors secured from the Indians their grant of land, a rectangular section of it was laid out in four blocks, for a village. This they surrounded with a stockade. The present bounding streets of the original quadrangle are Front, State, Ferry, and Washington Avenue, which coincide almost identically with the location of the original streets and palisade.

Arent Van Curler's home lot at the northwest corner of Union and Church Streets was next south of the Vrooman-Fuller lot. It passed into the hands of the Veeder family as mentioned in the Vrooman patent of 1718. Part of the lot (originally it was 200 feet on each street) is now the site of the Mohawk Club.

The Schenectady settlement, the first white settlement in the Mohawk Valley, was begun with the granting of a deed by the Indians on July 27th, 1661, signed by three of their number, representing the tribe. The deed reads in part:

“Owners of a certain piece of land named in Dutch the ‘Groote Vlachte’ and lying behind Fort Orange, between the same and the Mohawk’s lands, who declare they have granted * * * to the behoof of Sieur Arent Van Curler, the said piece of land or Great Flat, by the Indians named Schonowe, in its compass of circumference with its woods and hills * * * ”

The description is very meagre and indefinite and allotment of the land to members of Van Curler’s associates was somewhat difficult to arrange. The tillable or bottom (flat) land was all that was considered of value and being insufficient in acreage, the Indians on May 28th, 1670, sold a second tract of land “within three Dutch miles in compasse on boathe side of the River, westward, which ends at Hinquariones (Towarecoune) where the Last Battle was, between the Mohawks and the North Indians,” which is the present western boundary of the county. But no confirmatory patent was issued until the Governor Thomas Dongan patent of November 1st, 1684. This embraced 128 square miles of territory, and was in favor of the five original Trustees chosen to act for the settlers.

But Van Curler had nothing to do with the second purchase of land. On April 30th, 1667, M. De Tracy, Governor of Canada, wrote to him from Quebec saying

“If you find it agreeable to come hither this summer, as you have caused me to hope, you will be most welcome and entertained to the utmost of my ability as I have great esteem for you, though I have not a personal acquaintance with you.

Believe this truth and that I am Sir, your affectionate and assured servant.”

Having accepted the invitation, Van Curler prepared for his journey. Governor Nicolls furnished him with a letter to the Viceroy. It bears date "20 May, 1667," and reads

"Mons. Curler has been inprtyuned by divers of his friends at Quebec to give them a visit, and ambitious to kiss your hands, he hath entreated my passe and liberty to conduct and accompany a young gentleman, M. Fontaine, who unfortunately fell into the barbarous hands of his enemies, and by means of Mons. Curler, obtained his liberty."

On the 4th of July of that year Jeremias Van Rensselaer writing to Holland, announces that "Our cousin, Arent Van Curler, proceeds overland to Canada, having obtained leave from our General, and being invited thither by the Viceroy, M. De Tracy."

This meeting between De Tracy and Van Curler might easily have changed the history of the Colony for Van Curler was a peacemaker, a powerful factor among the Indians and thoroughly trusted and appreciated by Governor Nicolls. However, had he been successful in bringing about an agreement between England and France, it is difficult to conceive of its being more than temporary. There was no thought of a division between the warring nations though they had an entire continent to divide. It was a case of "winner take all."

Historians say "in an evil hour he (Van Curler) embarked on board a frail canoe to cross Lake Champlain, and having been overtaken by a storm, was drowned near Split Rock." The news of the calamity was at once brought to Schenectady and a committee appointed to inquire into the details. From records of the testimony we note:

"Testimony taken by the Honorable Committee of the Commissaries (appointed to enquire) into the unfortunate death of Mr. Curler, this 29th July/8th August, 1667 at Schanechtade.

Present

Philip Pietersz Schuyler

R. van Rensselaer

Sander Leendertsz Glen

Interrogatory and examination of Drilacxse a Mohawk Indian and a squaw named Decanahora. Translated by Jacques Cornelisz (Van Slyke).

Question; When did they enter the canoe with Curler to go across the lake and how did it happen that Curler was drowned and that *they* escaped?"

The explanation made was that on the 14th day after leaving Schenectady, about an hour before sundown, they entered canoes to cross the lake. Van Curler and two other Dutchmen were in one canoe, together with the Indian Drilacxse and his squaw and child. In another canoe were two Dutchmen and an Indian. After getting some distance from shore the wind freshened about sunset. The waves broke over the canoe and it began to fill with water, whereupon the Indian and his squaw stripped, preparatory to swimming. The squaw told Van Curler to throw all his goods overboard but Van Curler would not consent. Slowly but surely the canoe filled with water and sank beneath them. The Indian and his squaw, being able to swim, managed to hang on to the canoe which had turned upside down. The child was drowned. The Indian testified that he tried three times to get Van Curler, who could not swim, to hold on to the canoe, but owing to the high waves he failed. Van Curler and both other Dutchmen were drowned. The other canoe had turned about and safely regained the shore. Drilacxse and his squaw were washed ashore late that night and joined the party from the other canoe. They testified that from the point where they were stranded they were just able to see the point of the island on which the French fort was built.

Governor Nicolls, learning of the tragedy, wrote the magistrates of Albany from Fort James under date of August 17th, 1667, expressing his concern and sorrow over the drowning, for Van Curler had been one of his trusted friends.

The Mohawks were mourners along with the Dutch and English. Indeed it is a question if they ever again had as loyal and true a friend as Van Curler had proved. They were at Schenectady the time the testimony was taken and were much concerned over the future relationship with the white men, now

that the hand of Van Curler had been snatched from the helm. Their statement has also been handed down:

"Anno 1667, this 28th July/7th August.

Proposition made by the Mohawks, after Corlaer's death, at Schanectade, in the house of Arent Van Curler, in the presence of Jacques Cornelisz, Sander Leendertsz, Theunis Cornelisz, Jan Van Eps and Cornelis Cornelisz. First, they bewail his death, saying that they are sorry that he, who so long resided in this country, and ruled in this region, should have perished thus.

Secondly, they say there will doubtless come another Chief, but they expect that he will not rule so well. Therefore we request that you appoint a good ruler over us. We shall govern ourselves accordingly. Thereupon they gave 24 hands of sewan, 12 on the first statement and 12 on the second."

"Anno 1667, 28th July/7th August.

Answer made to their request.

To the first, we said that he was not a man whom we could easily replace. Also, the sorrow was so great that for the present, we could hardly speak of it. Let sadness reign in our hearts. Even if we (wished to) appoint another ruler at once, we could not do so, because he was such a wise man.

Should we then, in this sadness, immediately appoint another ruler? Therefore we shall wait until sorrow has been lifted from our hearts, otherwise if we immediately appointed another ruler it would seem as if we were glad. Let his place remain vacant, for half a year or a whole year as a token of mourning.

Answer made according to our knowledge with which they were satisfied.

Jacques Cornelisz

Cornelis Cornelissen."

The English-French relations, long on edge, were further embittered by the burning of Schenectady, and the massacre of a great part of its inhabitants. This story has been told so often it is unnecessary to repeat it here, more than to note the recorded statement that but five houses were spared from a total of "80 good houses." The French report mentions but two houses

saved, "that of the Widow Bratt, wherein the French M. de Montigny had been carried when wounded," the other being the Glen house across the Mohawk. But we know this is an exaggeration. A translation of an entry in Dutch in the Glen family Bible states in effect that everything was destroyed or burned "but for five houses." It is certain the Glen house in Scotia was one, that the Bratt house was another, that the Vrooman house, the timbers of which are in the present Fuller house, was a third. The identity of the other two will probably never be definitely known. Judge Sanders gives his opinion that an old building at State and Water Streets, destroyed in the great fire of 1819, probably the tavern of Jacques Cornelis Van Slyck (for this was the lot apportioned to him as an original proprietor) was one of the five buildings spared, since he was a great favorite and an adopted son of the Mohawks. Certainly all five are gone now, with the exception of some material included in the Glen and Vrooman houses, both entirely reconstructed.

The following letter proves the unrest prevalent at Albany following the massacre. It also shows how acutely conscious they were of the lack of a central government from which to draw troops and funds. The letter is among the Connecticut archives.

Alb: 15 feb 1689/90.

Dear Neighbors and friends

We must acquaint yw yt never Poor people in the world was in a worse Condition than we are at present. No gouveneur nor command. No Money to forward an Expedition and scarce men enough to mantein the City and we must Conclude there only aim is this Place, which once being attained ye 5 nations are Rent from ye English Croune and in Stead of being a Bolwark to these dominions as hither they have Proved will help to Ruine and Destroy and Lay all waste we have here Plainly Lain ye case before you and doubt not but you will so much take it to heart, and make all Readinesse in ye Spring to Invade Canida by water. We Pray god Continually for ye arrival of our gov'r without which we can doe but Little haveing enough to doe to keep ye Indians to our side with great Expense for these distractions and Revolutions at N. York Brought us into a Miserable Condition That

without ye assistance and ye 50 men of N. York we should not be Able to keep the Place if an enemy came. Wee begg an answer with all haste that we may satisfy ye Indians wee write to N. York and oy'r Parts of our mean Condition we have no more to adde in these troublesome times But that we are

Hon'ble Gent'n

Your most humble and obed't Serv's

Ye Convention of Albany

(Signed)

Pt. Schuyler Mayor

Dirk Wessels Rekorder

K. V. Rensselaer Justus

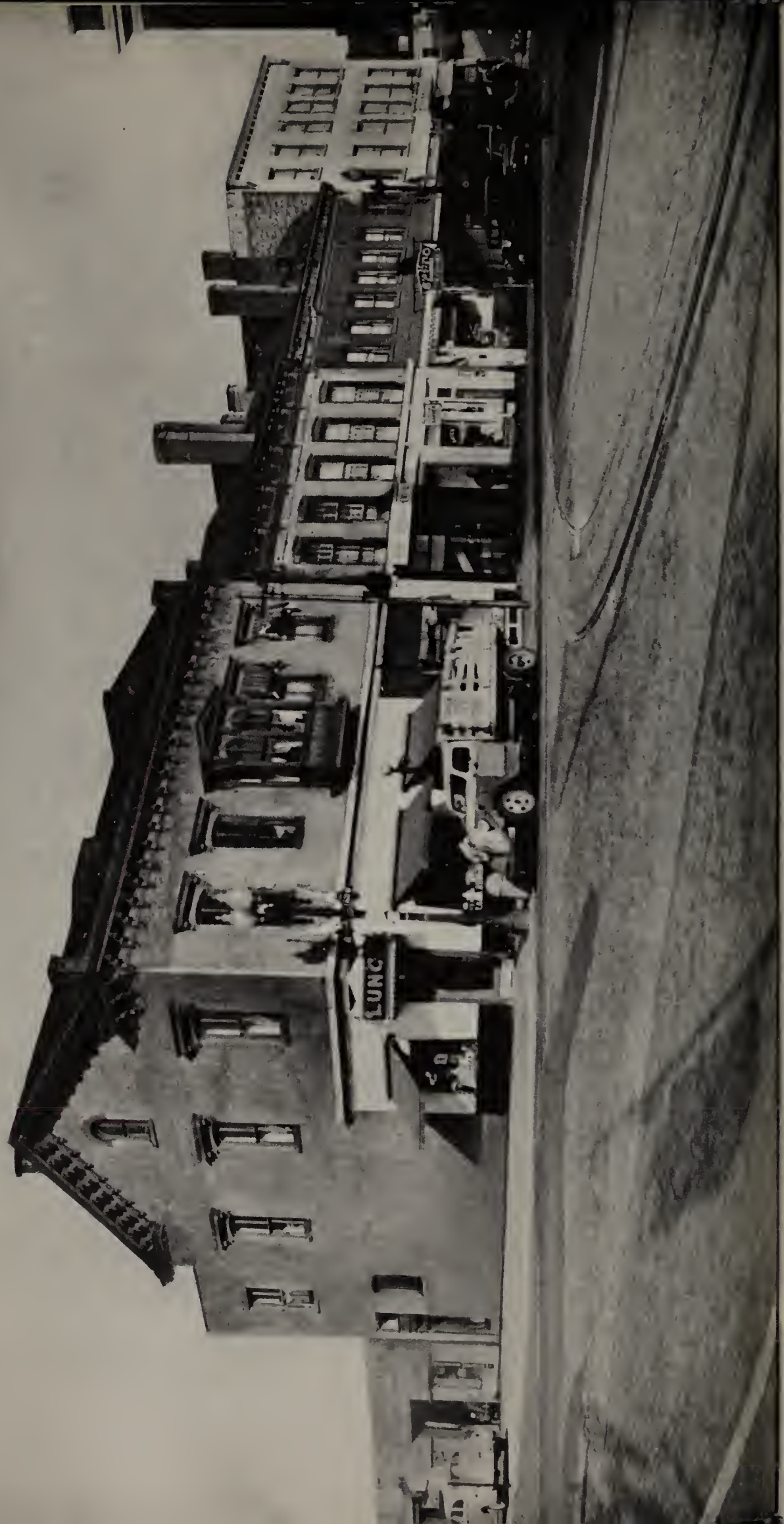
Gent'n.

It would not be amisse if ye should send Post to all y'r towns to be upon there guard y't thay may not be surpressed for Probably Some of there Troops may be out.

With Schenectady destroyed and Albany in a furore it took better than a quarter of a century to establish quiet and confidence along the frontier. Then war broke out anew and brought Samuel Fuller to Schenectady with Abercrombie's army in 1758. During the war he was engaged in construction at Schenectady, Albany, Stillwater, Lake George and Niskayuna. Later, in 1761, he located in Schenectady. He was the architect to whom is credited so many of the principal buildings erected during a period of some fifteen years prior to the Revolution at which time he died. It was his only surviving son, Jeremiah, who built this Fuller homestead. Jeremiah was born October 26th, 1766, and married Mary, daughter of George Kendall, in 1790. There were fourteen children, all but two of whom reached maturity. The forebear was Dr. Fuller, an Englishman, who came to America in the Mayflower. He was the first physician in the Colony. He died in 1633. The succeeding generation of Fullers had among them a goodly sprinkling of doctors and ministers and from this stock Jeremiah descended.



ABRAHAM YATES HOUSE,
[1710 to 1730.]



CAMPBELL HOUSE

SCHENECTADY

THE story of the builder and owner of this house is the "poverty-to-riches" story of Daniel Campbell, a native-born Irishman who in 1754 at the age of 23 came to Schenectady with a pack on his back. He possessed all the attributes of success, being an uncommonly shrewd trader, industrious, and economical. At the outbreak of the Revolution he was a man of means, carrying on a large "up-country" Indian trade. After the war his wealth allowed him to buy soldiers' rights to land, thus adding very greatly to his wealth.

Through the years preceding the war his friends had been largely among that class of Englishmen who remained Loyalists. One of these Loyalists, Sir William Johnson, was a close personal friend and often a guest at this house when he was in the city.

Mr. Campbell built the house in 1762 after plans by Samuel Fuller, an architect, to whom is credited the greater number of the large and important houses built in this period throughout the Valley. Today one would never suspect the house ever had any "architecture" after succumbing to many alterations, both exterior and interior. But the fact that it remains standing on a valuable location on the principal thoroughfare of a busy city proves its soundness as a building regardless of its fine points.

Nothing remains along the street that is its contemporary though some of the buildings to the eastward date back toward the opening of the century. The fifty years that preceded 1825 did bring tremendous changes. The public stocks and whipping post which stood across the street were in use as late of 1795, but it would be necessary to go back nearly three centuries to a "beginning" of this historic location. While it is true that nothing visible remains contemporary with this home, it is also true that under the pavement out in the center of the intersection of the streets are the graves, the burials of the pioneers of the city during the first sixty to seventy years of its existence, for this was the location of the First Dutch Church with its cemetery

beside it. For many years all deeds covering this property definitely specified that no digging or excavating should be done. The city, however, dug cisterns to be used for fire purposes before the installation of water mains, and in this excavating many of these graves were uncovered.

Daniel Campbell's story is fairly well told in the minutes of the Schenectady Committee of Safety and the Albany Commissioners for Conspiracies from which the following quotations were taken:

"May 16th, 1775 — Received a letter from the Chairman of the Committee at Albany acquainting this Board that Daniel Campbell Esq. has a quantity of gun powder in store at Albany, which he wishes to take out, but this Committee refused him that liberty until they acquainted this Board of the same.

Having taken the contents of said letter into consideration, and foreseeing the evil consequent that may attend the powder falling into the hands of our enemies, Resolved, that this Board will purchase the said powder from Daniel Campbell for the use of the inhabitants of this township and others who may stand in need thereof."

Minutes of May 24, 1775 — Resolved; That this board do now purchase 335 lbs. of gun powder from Daniel Campbell Esq. at 3s per pound.

Resolved: That said powder be delivered in custody of John Post and John G. Lansing, and that they dispose of it to the public as hereinafter directed. Said Post and Lansing are ordered to dispose of the powder at 3s 9d per pound; 3s 10d by the half pound; 4s by the quarter; and not to dispose of any of it to any person who lives out of the township without an order from a member of the committee.

Minutes of Aug. 4th, 1775 — This board being informed that Daniel Campbell, Esq. and Alexander Ellice, intend going up to Niagara and from thence to Montreal.

Resolved: That Messrs. Campbell and Ellice be sent for and examined relative to their intentions of going up the country.

Said Campbell and Ellice being sent for and present, declared upon their honor that they were going up the country on their private business, and that they would not carry any letters or messages of news to or from any person, who was inimical to the American cause.

Resolved: That Messrs. Campbell and Ellice be permitted to go, and that a certificate be given them.

Minutes of April 17th, 1776 — Received a letter from Daniel Campbell, Esq. requesting a recommendation from this board in order to obtain a passport from General Schuyler to send goods up the country to Messrs. Andrews and Meldrum.

Resolved: That Mr. Campbell cannot have a recommendation from this board to General Schuyler.

Minutes of May 13th, 1777 — Resolved: By this board that the following persons are looked upon as dangerous. (Then follows a list of ten names and among them is the name of Daniel Campbell.)

On May 15th, 1777, the committee being notified of the disappearance of Daniel Campbell, a search was instituted to learn his whereabouts. He evidently reappeared without getting into trouble, but on July 30th, of the same year, he was arrested for refusing to accept Continental currency.

From the minutes of the Albany Commissioners for Conspiracies the following notes have been taken:

"Minutes of May 1st, 1778 — Daniel Campbell Esq. and James Ellice were taken before the Board for speaking words which in the opinion of the Board might have a dangerous tendency and prove detrimental to the Liberties of America.

Ordered that they be respectively held in Recognizance in £500 each.

Minutes of July 14, 1778 — Daniel Campbell, James Ellice and John Visgar were severally cited to appear before the Board on the Sixteenth instant at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of that day to render satisfaction to us touching their conduct during this War conformable to the Act lately passed respecting Persons of Neutral and equivocal characters.

Minutes of July 17th, 1778 — Daniel Campbell and John Visgar of Schenectady appd according to citation and being tendered the oath pointed out by the Act lately passed by the Legislature they both refused to take it.

Minutes of July 20th, 1778 — Ordered that a Certificate be sent down to John Morin Scott, Esq, Secretary of the State of New York certifying that James Ellice of Schenectady, Merchant, on the sixteenth day of July instant, Daniel Campbell Esq., late Judge of the Inferior Court and John Visgar late Justice of the Peace of Schenectady — did appear before us and that the Oath as prescribed in the Act was tendered to Them which they refused to take —

Ordered that a letter be wrote to his Excellency the Governor informing him of the names of the persons who have refused to take the Oath and requesting to know when we must send them and who he purposes to detain for an Exchange.

Ordered that Daniel Campbell, John Visgar - - - prepare and hold themselves in readiness to be removed into the Enemy Lines by next Saturday and that the Secretary cause the said notice to be served on each of the foregoing persons.

Minutes of July 29th, 1778 — A petition was presented to the Board from Gysbert G. Marselis, Daniel Campbell and others reciting that by reason of the late orders of this Board for their removal they are under the greatest anxiety and requesting a temporary suspension (suspension?) of the Proceedings against them until they can make application to his Excellency the Governor for his permission to petition the Legislature for an Exemption from the Penalties of the Act —

Ordered that a letter be wrote to the above gentlemen informing that their requisition cannot be complied (with) - - -

Minutes of Aug. 1st, 1778 — Daniel Campbell, John Visgar, James Ellice and Cornelius Glen and Gysbert Fonda appeared before the Board and declaring their readiness to take the Oath by the Act prescribed provided the Board would grant them the indulgence and we being of the opinion that they could not be per-

mitted have resolved to take the opinion of the Judges of the Supreme Court thereon.

Ordered that notice be given to Daniel Campbell, James Ellice, John Visgar (and others) to appear on Friday the 14th day of August instant in the Court House in the City of Albany with 14 days provisions for themselves and such of their families as they chuse should accompany them (persons capable of bearing arms excepted). They are also expected if they think proper to take with them all their clothing and household furniture. The charges of Transportation to the Enemies lines is to be defrayed by themselves.

Minutes of Oct. 29th, 1778 — Ordered that a letter be wrote to the members of the Senate and Assembly of the City and County of Albany respecting Cornelius Glen, Daniel Campbell and a number of other persons, who after their refusal to take the Oath as prescribed by the Act to be taken by persons of neutral and equivocal characters offered to take the same - - -

Minutes of May 19, 1779 — Daniel Campbell, and James Ellice having been cited to appear before the Board in consequence of the Act of the Legislature of this State an Act to amend the Act more effectually to prevent the mischiefs arising from the influence and example of persons of equivocal and suspected characters in this State, by which the Commissioners for Conspiracies are authorized to administer the Oath of Allegiance in the said Act contained to those persons who after refusing have offered to take the same, and the said Daniel Campbell and James Ellice appearing this day according to order and the said Oath took the same.

Resolved: that certificates to be given to the said Daniel Campbell and James Ellice of their having taken the above mentioned Oath. - - -

From the foregoing it is evident he was trading in much wanted, fast-moving merchandise! His stock of gunpowder was unusually large, even for a merchant of those days. One is led to wonder why it was stored in Albany rather than Schenectady. Perhaps he thought it would be safer there, either from confiscation or destruction; or perhaps it was to be made a part of a shipment of salt to Sir John Johnson for his blooded cattle!

Before his father had been dead a year Sir John found it necessary to fortify Johnson Hall. The Battle of Lexington had been fought and no one could tell what would happen.

It is interesting to note that though Campbell was constantly under suspicion, he continued his trading and even succeeded in getting permission to go up to Niagara and thence to Montreal. In the light of subsequent events, this seems to have been an ill-advised decision on the part of the Committee of Safety, regardless of what stipulations were made that no messages were to be carried. Evidently the Committee felt his trading had best be confined within the lines for his next request for a passport, made six months later, was refused.

The shoe was beginning to pinch. A man of his wealth, prominence, and importance to be refused such a reasonable request — preposterous! He evidently decided to do something about it but what he did or where he went does not appear. But whatever, and wherever, he was gone long enough to excite the suspicion of the Committee who detailed someone to look into it. He left soon after his request for the passport was refused (April 17th) and was in the spotlight again by July 30th when he was once more arrested for speaking “unfriendly words.”

Nothing that had happened to him thus far seems to have changed his opinions or modified his actions one iota, for two months later he was again arrested, but the cause is not clear. It was evident something he *did* this time, rather than something he *said*, which forced the Committee to the opinion it was time he be made to take the Oath of Allegiance or move out of the country, lock, stock, and barrel. One cannot but admire the man for refusing the Oath and sticking to his convictions. When the time came for him to be moved out, he exerted every possible means to have his case made an exception to the rule. The stay in the execution of the orders proves his importance and his influence. But this was war and he had no alternative. In May of the following year he took the Oath and the King lost another good subject. He died August 16th, 1802, and his widow shared with relatives in Ireland the Colonial money he once refused to accept.

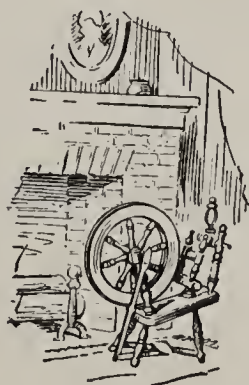
The widow was Angelica, a daughter of Arent Samuelse Bratt, a descendant of one of the original settlers of the city. She

outlived him some ten years and is remembered for her universal benevolence. She had always been most generous with her church — old St. George's — particularly so after the death of her husband, who does not seem to have shared this estimable quality in equal degree. On one occasion a fellow churchman wrote to her

“all that has been dear to her, is there Entomb'd; an Husband and an only child who was as dear to her as life, and where she doubtless expects to be laid herself, but we hope not for many years to come — no doubt her own good sense informs her that only that part of her property which she lays out for the benefit of the Church is the only part that will perpetuate her memory and cause that elegant Vault where she expects to lay to be kept in repair for if there be not a support for a Minister the Church must go to decay and the graveyard become a Common.”

The letter no doubt brought results for the required improvements to the Church were soon begun.

She died in 1812 and was placed in the “elegant Vault” beside the remains of her husband and her son David. She made the Church a beneficiary in her will, granting a sum more than sufficient to maintain the vault in repair, but the gift was conditioned upon this always being done, and the Church has fulfilled the trust.





ST. GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH SCHENECTADY

THE first minister of the Church of England at Schenectady was the Reverend Thomas Barclay, who came to Albany in 1708 as Chaplain at Fort Frederick. He immediately became acquainted with Domine Lydius, pastor of the Dutch church there, and a real friendship ensued. Domine Lydius died in 1710, leaving the Reverend Barclay as the only minister in the Albany-Schenectady district, for Domine Lydius had been preaching at the Dutch church in Schenectady in the absence of a minister at that place. Following his predecessor's practice, Reverend Barclay also preached to the Schenectady congregation.

Because they had no church edifice in Albany, the Reverend Barclay served the communicants of the Church of England by preaching in the Dutch Church there. Later a popular subscription, added to by the inhabitants of Schenectady, made possible the building of St. Peter's, which was opened for services in 1716. Albany at this time had a population of about 1200 and Schenectady about 600. His efforts were constantly toward the upbuilding of the English church, but it seems the difficulties of his position were too much for him. His salary had been cut in half, and having a family of eight, he was in actual want. He died in 1731 after suffering four years of insanity.

The Reverend John Milne succeeded him for a term of ten years and possibly preached at Schenectady. In 1750 he requested a transfer and was succeeded by Reverend John Ogilvie, whose work among the Indians in the field was very considerable. He remained until 1764 and was succeeded by Reverend Thomas Brown.

In 1758 Reverend Ogilvie, together with a Schenectady resident named John W. Brown, set in motion a petition to raise funds for a church edifice, Sir William Johnson's name heading the list of subscribers with £31. The Dutch of both Schenectady and Albany contributed.

In 1759 the foundations were begun, the architecture being in the hands of Mr. Samuel Fuller. Due to lack of funds it was

not until ten years later that the church was completed. It is interesting to note that a "drive" for funds was made to the western limits of settlement at the German Flatts, where Hendrick Frey and Jost Herkimer unhesitatingly endorsed the effort and contributed.

The original church was 36 ft. wide by 56 ft. deep. The inside wall of the present vestibule was the west wall of the structure as first built. Sir William subscribed to a canopied pew in this building but funds were lacking to employ a minister. Then, too, trouble arose between the Presbyterians, who had subscribed to the building fund and used the church jointly with the Episcopalians, and the Presbyterians withdrew and held their meetings apart.

It was not until 1771 that the Reverend William Andrews was secured as minister, many previous efforts to engage others having for various reasons failed. Reverend Andrews speaks in a letter of the fact that his church is better attended in winter than in summer, "for at this time some of the congregation who are traders and batteaumen are absent sometimes as far as Detroit." His salary being insufficient, he opened a grammar school, but the revenue did not meet with his expectations and being in ill health he resigned. He was succeeded by the Reverend John Doty. At this juncture Sir William Johnson died and the church lost a valuable name which they had used diplomatically in their correspondence with the governing body of the "Society" in England to obtain concessions. This was the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," but as Trinity Church of New York stood sponsor for "St. George's" it is probable that only the more important matters were referred to the Church of England.

The populace was rapidly taking sides pro and con in the coming struggle for independence. The Reverend Doty was a Whig, as were many of his congregation, and he held services to the last, at which time, rather than hold service and *not* pray for the King, he was compelled to close the church about July, 1776.

He was brought before the Committee of Safety on a charge of plotting against the State, to which charge he pleaded "not guilty," while at the same time admitting he was loyal to England. He was sentenced to jail in Albany but soon secured a

release and returned to Schenectady, where he remained until after the Battle of Saratoga. By this time it was evident that since England had not gained a quick victory she was in for a long, long struggle. So in October 1777, being out of harmony with his surroundings, he secured permission to move with his family to Canada. Those household effects which he did not sell were later confiscated. He died at Three Rivers, Canada, in 1841.

During the entire course of the war the church remained idle, and because of the political faith of its erstwhile pastor as well as some of its congregation, the building itself suffered greatly through these years. Its proximity to the Queen's Fort made it valuable as a barracks, and so it was used for utilitarian purposes, for man as well as beast, as at this period of the city's history hogs were allowed to "pasture" in the streets.

Following the war in 1787 an Albany rector held services here at the request of the local congregation, and steps were taken to revive the church after a period of over ten years of idleness.

After 1790 the church was organized as a corporate body but was still financially unable to employ a rector, though the services of a reader had been procured in the person of Mr. Ammi Rogers. His duties were not confined to St. George's alone but shared with the Ballston Church, whose congregation contributed toward his salary. He evidently was entirely satisfactory for he was appointed a deacon in Trinity Church, New York City. He later returned to Schenectady and Ballston, at which time St. George's was repaired and improved. A steeple was added and the organ left to the church by Reverend Doty was put in suitable condition. By 1795-96 Mr. Rogers had resigned to become the rector of Christ Church, Ballston.

Judge James Duane of Duanesburg had built a church at his own expense to serve that neighborhood in which he lived and owned an immense acreage. This church was incorporated in 1795 and the Reverend Robert G. Wetmore was called as rector. St. George's, being then without a rector, an arrangement was made to secure the services of the Reverend Wetmore once in every three Sundays. His management of the church affairs proved highly satisfactory but unfortunately his health failed.

This compelled him to take a vacation, but as he did not recuperate, was unable to undertake the work and resigned.

Again a period of inactivity lasting two and a half years at which time St. George's received a gift from Trinity Church, New York, amounting to \$1,250.00 to be used for the purchase of a glebe, the income from which would aid in the support of the minister.

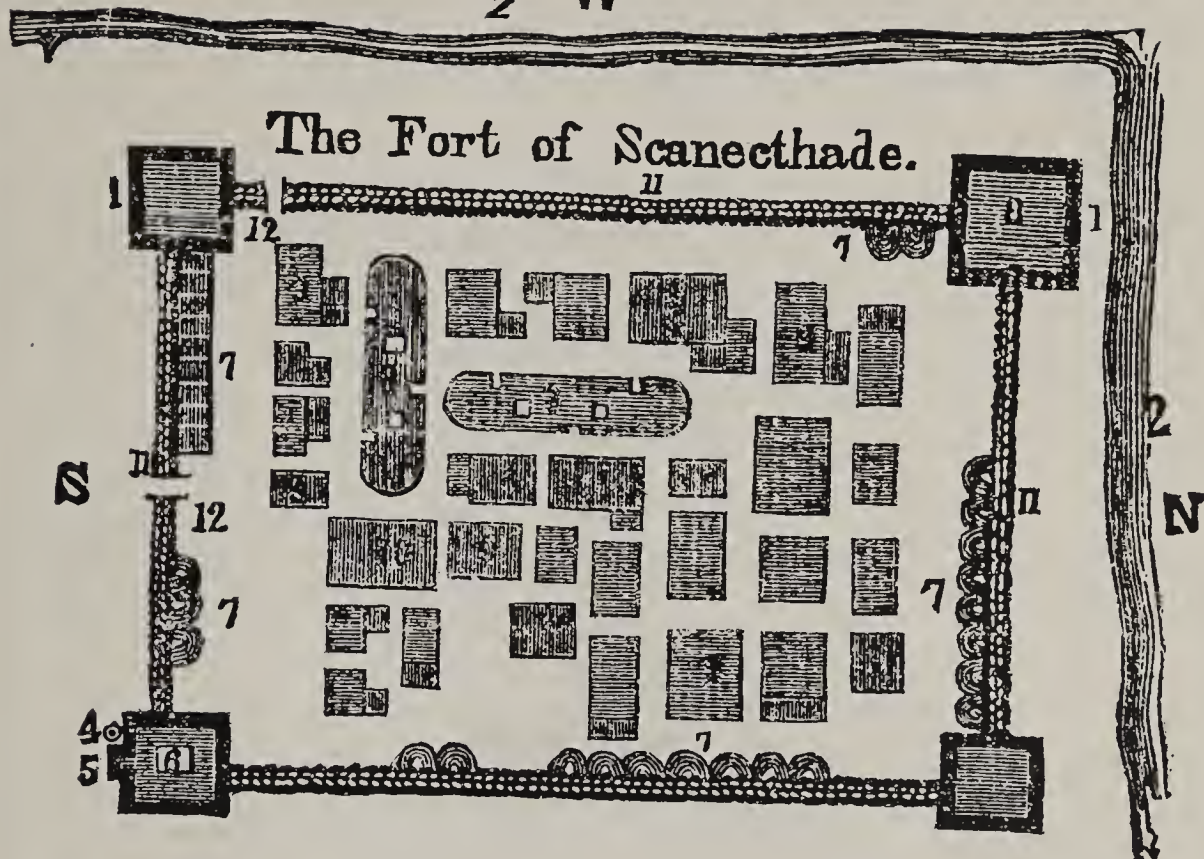
In 1804 a Methodist minister, Reverend Cyrus Stebbins, was preaching in Albany and came under the eye of the congregation. He was offered the charge, accepted it and was ordained as rector in 1806.

At this time the Episcopal Church at Duaneburg was without a rector, a circumstance which was of considerable concern to Trinity Church. To remedy this Trinity offered to add \$500.00 per annum to the Reverend Stebbins' salary with the understanding that he would hold services at Duaneburg at least four times each year. This plan was tried but the local vestry was able to show that this sum was not sufficient to pay the costs involved in opening the church and transporting the rector back and forth. Trinity conceded this and withdrew their demand, leaving the local church free to use the money as suited them best. Rector Stebbins' family increased, but since the church income did not, Trinity again came to the rescue with temporary relief; the Reverend Stebbins left in 1819.

Then came a short period during which the Reverend Alonzo Potter was connected with the church, and in 1821 the Reverend Alexis Proal was called from Johnstown.

By this time the financial structure was decidedly better, and the church went steadily ahead. Its tall and slender steeple, reaching high above the mossy graves of those who gave it birth and nourished it through its infant years, is their mighty tombstone which needs no epitaph.

2 W




AS IT APPEARED IN 1690. SITUATED IN NORTH-WEST
CORNER OF THE STOCKADE



THE GOVERNOR YATES HOUSE

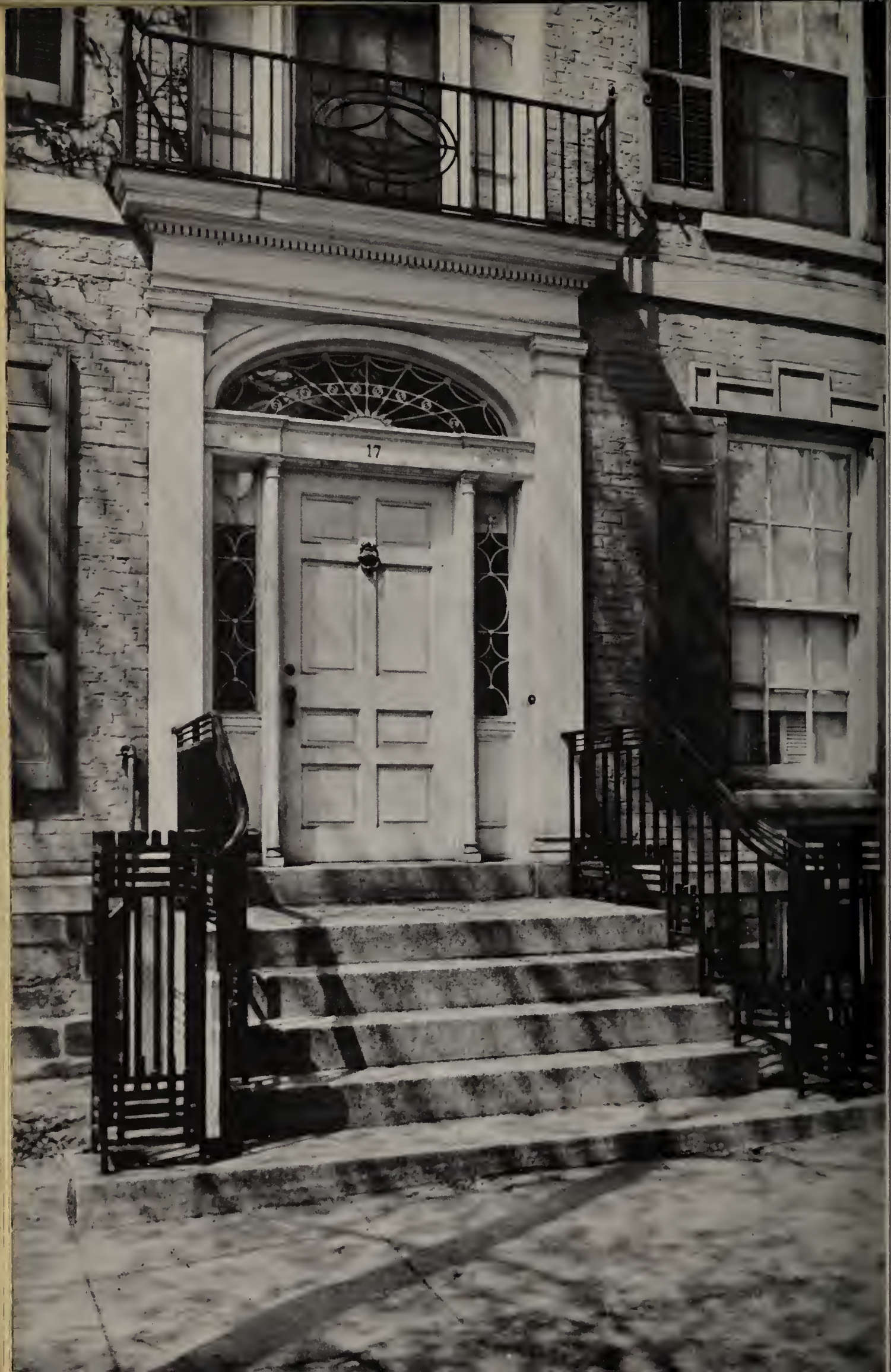
SCHENECTADY

 HIS is an interesting and beyond doubt a most important and dignified example of one of Schenectady's pre-Revolutionary homes. The first house built on this site was by William Hall, a soldier in the old French and Indian War. It was a gable-roofed structure. Hall was carried a captive to Canada, and some say even to France. In any event, the records agree that he was exchanged but died before he reached home. He left at least two children: a son William and a daughter named Anne. William inherited the property but moved to Canajoharie, selling the home to Tobias Ten Eyck, who built the present house in 1760.

Tobias was born in Albany about 1717 and came to Schenectady prior to 1750, the date of his marriage to Rachael De-Peyster of Albany. He was one of Schenectady's successful merchants and a prominent citizen. When the members of the first local "Committee of Safety" were chosen, he was named to serve. This he refused to do, though he does not seem to have been a Tory sympathizer as his name appears later on the Albany Militia rolls. He spent the later years of his life in Albany, where he died on February 9, 1785, and was buried there under the Dutch Church.

Following the Ten Eyck ownership the property passed to James Ellice, a prominent and wealthy trader. There were several Ellice brothers, all of them engaged in this same business reaching up the Valley and as far as Montreal, where one of the brothers was always in residence. Their trading flourished, through the aid and friendship of Sir William Johnson. These men were for the most part Loyalists, and all save James, who died here, had left Schenectady before the close of the Revolution.

Mary Eliza Adams, widow of James Ellice, married Joseph C. Yates, the future Governor, whose lineage is best understood by naming the original settler first. This was Joseph Yates, an Englishman, who came to Albany just following the taking over of the Colony by the English in 1664. He died in 1730 leaving



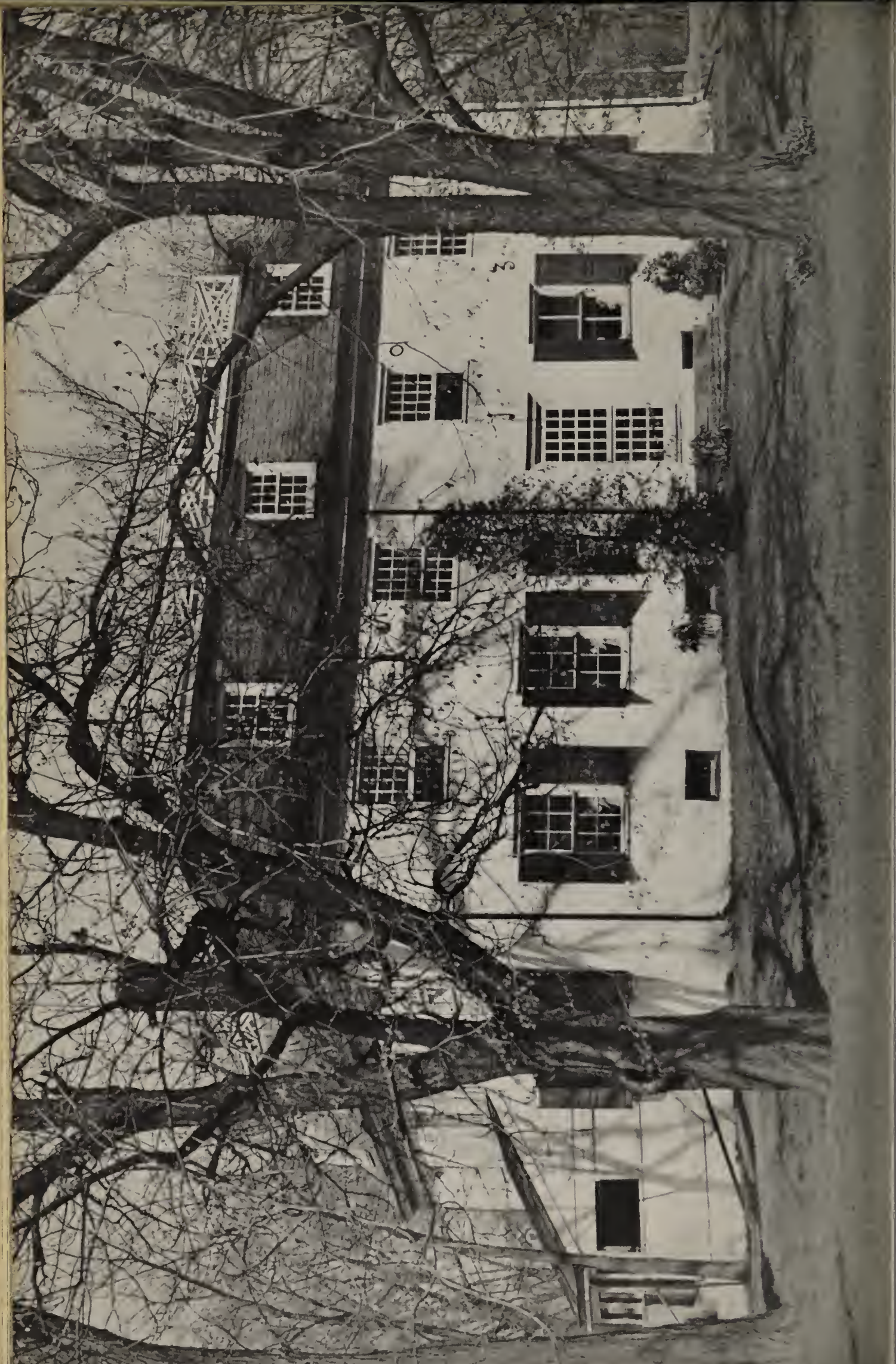
four sons and two daughters. Christoffel, the son, born in 1684, was the eldest child.

Christoffel remained in Albany, but his son Joseph, who married Eva, the daughter of Jellis Fonda of Schenectady, settled on Alplaus Creek just east of Schenectady in 1734. Here Joseph's eldest son Christopher was born in 1737. He was commonly known as Colonel Christopher. His title came through his military service begun with Colonel William Johnson, at which time he had a Captain's commission. He was engaged at Ticonderoga where he was wounded in 1758. In 1759 he was in the campaign against Fort Niagara and present at its capture. He left "a diary of my proceedings from my father's house in Schenectady which I left on June 1st with the last party of our regiment, commanded by Col. Johnson, consisting of about 300 men with whale boats." During the Revolution he was a Colonel in command of a fatigue regiment. At this time he built the house which still stands on Front Street, just east of the house pictured. Here he died in 1785. In this house his son, Joseph C., one of a family of ten children, whose mother was Jannetje Bratt, was born on Nov. 9th, 1768.

Joseph C. became a prominent lawyer and took up residence in the Ten Eyck mansion, now owned by his wife. His second wife was Marie Kane, and his third Elizabeth De Lancy of Westchester County. He was the first Mayor of Schenectady in 1798 following the granting of the city charter in that year. He next became State Senator for two years (1806-08), when he resigned to accept the Judgeship of the State Supreme Court. This led to his election as Governor in 1823. In 1825 he returned to this house and to his private life and practice. He died in 1837.

The house, as originally erected, was two stories high with gable roof, after plans by the famous architect, Samuel Fuller. The small addition at the left was added later by the Governor for his office. Many important conferences and affairs of the State were settled in this wing. The third story was added in recent years. The spacious gardens at the rear still reach down to the river. There are stories of an underground passage that led from the basement toward the river, but if this did exist no traces of it are known today.

← *Entrance, Governor Yates Home*



GLEN-SANDERS HOUSE

SCOTIA



ALEXANDER LINDSEY GLEN, born near Inverness, Scotland, about 1610, was of noble birth, his family having intermarried with that of Robert III, the family name at that time being "Lindsey." The religious unrest in Scotland caused him to flee to Protestant Holland, where he married a Dutch maiden named Catalijn Donckesz. Sometime subsequent to his departure from Scotland he added "Glen" to his name, it being a common custom with religious refugees to alter their name.

In 1639 the couple sailed from Holland for New Amsterdam and established a residence, since Glen had signed a contract with the Patroon of Rensselaerwyck.

In 1646 he took title to land in New Amsterdam (New York) and later owned considerable other property, both real and personal, near the town and on Long Island. During a part of the time he was in the employ of the Patroon, "sailing yachts," but the agreement specified "not when they tapped liquor." The sailing evidently was between the two countries, as in 1646 Glen with other skippers was notified by the Director of the Colony not to transport colonists to the Mannhattans without his approval. In a letter from the Patroon in Holland, to Van Curler in 1643, the writer says: "I am pleased to hear that Sanders Leendersen is an upright man; such people I am inclined to advance."

In 1654 his bond was accepted by the Director of the Colony, when offered to guarantee the rental of some mills near Albany, showing that by this time he was possessed of considerable property.

By 1658 he was at Schenectady on his grant of land which he had received from the Indians. Later (1665) this was ratified by a Crown Patent. His first house, the first white man's dwelling along the Mohawk, was built in 1659, its site being about one hundred feet south of the present dwelling, on land subject to erosion by the river. By 1713 this erosion had endangered the foundations, so the house was dismantled and as

much as possible of the material was utilized in the present building, constructed that year by his son, John A. Glen.

Glen joined Van Curler as one of the original proprietors of Schenectady in 1662, and received his proportional share of the land grant. His town lot fronted 200 feet on the west side of Washington Avenue, just north of State Street, and his substantial home there was occupied by his descendants until its destruction in the great fire of 1819. His estate across the river he called "Scotia," in memory of his native Scotland, which later gave the permanent name to the settlement on that side of the river.

As Schenectady grew and prospered, Alexander Lindsey Glen, with personal funds, erected the first Reformed Dutch Church at the junction of State and Church Streets in 1682. Prior to this, those wishing to attend Sunday worship journeyed to Albany where Do. Gideon Schaets preached. But the trip occupied an entire week-end! Upon the completion of the building, Reverend Petrus Taschemaker was given the charge. Two years later, in 1684, Mrs. Glen died, and the next year the old settler, Alexander Lindsey Glen, joined her. Both were buried under the church he had so generously provided.

Major John A. Glen, born in 1648, the youngest son of Alexander Lindsey Glen, the original proprietor, built the present house in 1713, as stated. This house is of great architectural interest. The story runs that only the biggest and soundest trees to be found were felled, cut into log lengths, and squared by hand, for they were too massive to move conveniently. After squaring they were somewhat easier to handle but still of too great weight and size to be used, so they were sawed in half on each lineal dimension, thus making four timbers from each log, these remaining timbers still being two feet square. There are other examples of lumber cut from enormous logs; some of the wide door panels are a single pine board. Much of the hardware of the house is "original" as is the panelling and other woodwork, all of which proves the excellent quality of workmanship possible at this early day when workmen were hired "by the month" rather than "by the hour."

Within the house are many almost priceless relics of the early days of the Glens and of the Sanders who later married into the

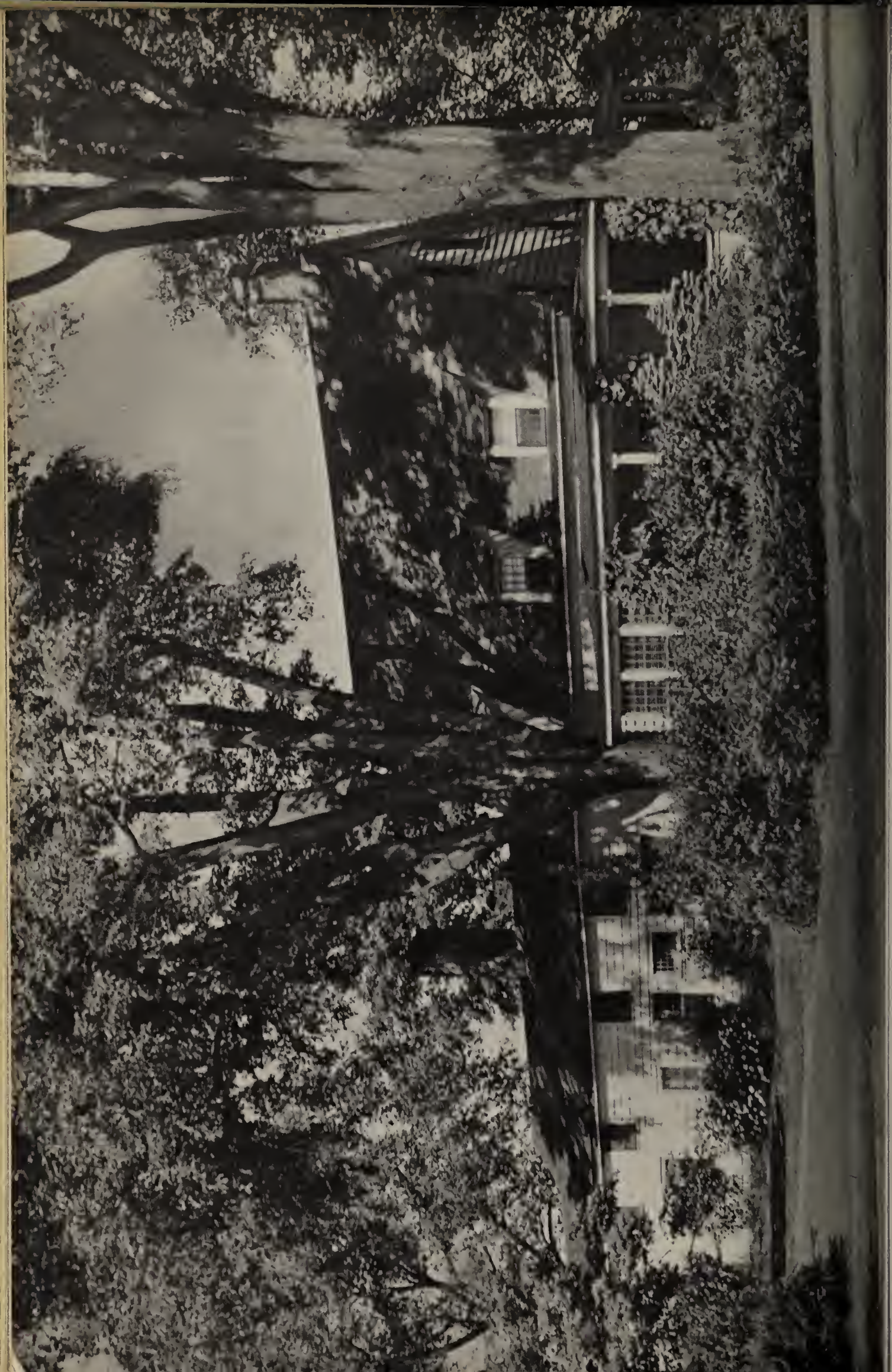
Glen family. Among these is a round mahogany table, said to be the very one at which the French officers in charge of the expeditionary force which destroyed Schenectady ate their breakfast following the burning of the village in 1690.

Van Curler, the leading citizen of his time, was now dead and Alexander Glen had taken his place at the head of the settlement. This accounts for the officers calling at his house, which they had spared out of respect for kindness he had shown a fugitive French priest as is related in the following story. Major Glen, it will be seen, was careful not to offend the Mohawks, with whom the settlers must necessarily live on friendly terms, while the Indians on their part were just as anxious to maintain the friendship of the Dutch, from whom they obtained firearms, rum, clothing, etc.

One day the Mohawks brought a prisoner to the Glen mansion which stood adjacent to a knoll where it was the Indian custom to torture their captives. They asked the Major to lock the prisoner in the basement until the following morning at which time the torture rites would take place. Major Glen saw the prisoner was a French priest whom they had brought from one of their Castles up the Mohawk. He realized that somehow he must contrive to save the man's life, yet at the same time it would have to be accomplished without offending the Indians.

He told the Indians that it would be very difficult to imprison a priest as priests were gifted with magical powers; but he directed the Indians to take the prisoner to the basement and lock him up themselves and keep the key, as he feared the evil consequences of having anything to do with it; furthermore, that he himself must be up and away early in the morning to Albany for a load of salt, and that he might not be at home when the tortures began. The Indians, following instructions, locked the priest in the basement and then in anticipation of the happy ceremony to come in the morning, proceeded to celebrate the coming event by getting drunk.

In the very early morning the Major's team and wagon departed for Albany carrying a huge cask, in which to bring back the salt. Soon after, the Indians began to bestir themselves, and coming to the basement, were furious upon finding their captive had escaped. The Major, who had sent his team and wagon on



without him, explained that due to the Priest's magical powers, his Reverence had undoubtedly escaped through the large key-hole from which they had removed the key.

The story does not relate whether or not the salt came back safely, but certainly the priest, hidden in the cask, got safely away.

The Sanders (Saunders) family who are connected with the property revert to an ancestor whose memory is perpetuated in Allhallows Church, London, where a tablet on its wall reads as follows:

“In Memory of

The Rev. Mr. Lawrence Saunders, M.A., Rector of All-hallows, Bread Street, Who for Sermons here Preached, in defense of the Doctrines of the Reformation of the Church of England from ye corruptions of the Church of Rome. Suffered Martyrdom ye third year of Queen Mary, being burnt at Coventry, Feb'y ye 8, 1555.”

The widow of this martyr, together with her two sons, escaped to Holland, and later Elsie Saunders, another widow, presumably of one of the sons just referred to, came to New York with *her* two sons about the year 1646. These persons seem to have been the first settlers of this name in America. The brothers soon located at Albany where they became Indian traders. John Saunders, who was of this family, married in 1739, Deborah, the daughter of Colonel Jacob Glen, then owner by inheritance of the old Glen homestead. As there were many heirs to the Jacob Glen estate, John Saunders purchased their individual interests for a total of \$10,000, a princely sum in those days.

During the ownership of Jacob Glen, the mansion was used as a place of safe keeping for the military records of the time, as well as land patents, treaties and other State papers. At one period the public papers of Sir William Johnson, Indian Commissioner for the Crown, were kept here. Later, those of quite another complexion, the minutes of the meetings of the Sons of Liberty, found a home here.

The house of Abraham Glen, built by him in 1730, diagonally opposite the old Mansion, now serves as the Public Library of the Village of Scotia. The house is a composite of many additions but the front view displays the typical, steeply pitched Dutch roof of the original structure. Abraham Glen was born April 11th, 1694, the ninth child of John Alexander Glen. He inherited this part of his father's estate and *his* son, John Sanders Glen, subsequently sold it to his cousin, Deborah Glen Sanders. The walls of the original building, though seemingly of wood, are of brick-filled construction, the outside being covered with wide weather-boarding. Doubtless the inside walls were a combination of panelling and plaster, the brick being roughly daubed between the studding.

At a meeting of the Freeholders of the Township of Schenectady, May 6th, 1775, the following persons were unanimously chosen to act as a Committee of Correspondence, for the safety and protection of the Township, viz:

Rinier Minderse
James Wilson
Hugh Mitchell
Henry Glen
Harmanus Wendle

John Sanders
Abraham Outhout
Tobyus Ten Eyck
John Rosebom
Christopher Yates

At the meeting of the above members the 8th of May, at the tavern of Robert Clench, John Sanders and Tobyus Ten Eyck refused to serve. At the Albany Committee meeting on May 10th, in the Albany City Hall, the above members were present except that Corn's Cuyler and Jacobus Teller had taken the place of John Sanders and Tobyus Ten Eyck. Henry Glen was then chosen one of the eleven members to go to New York "to meet in General Congress on the 22nd instant." At another meeting on November 11th, 1775, he was elected one of five to represent "this City and County in Provincial Congress." Albany County at that time included what is now Schenectady County.

On July 23rd, 1775, Henry Glen was chosen, with one other, to go to Johnstown to inquire into the cause of the disturbance in that (Tryon) County, the Board being informed that Sheriff White and others had escaped jail and were supposed to be on

their way to Canada. The Sheriff, because of his rabid Toryism, had been thrown into his own gaol.

On July 19th, 1777 the following entry was made in the minutes of the Schenectady Committee:

"Henry Glen, Esq'r, D.Q.M.G'l. Informed this board that he wanted a Number of Waggon to Ride provision from Albany and to bring it to Johnstown and Cherry Valley Where the Garrison are quite out of provision and if not supplied must Consequently leave it And that he has applied to Major Swits for leave to take out of the Militia as many of them (that had waggons) as he wanted - - - "

The following quotation, taken from the minutes of the Committee Meeting of July 31st, 1779, leads one to believe the cares and responsibilities of the members were sometimes mitigated by the payment of the self-imposed penalty. It reads:

"On Motion made, Resolved that every member belonging to this board who does not attend fifteen minutes after the hour appointed for the Committee to meet, or on receiving notice, shall (unless they can give a reasonable excuse to the satisfaction of the board) pay the price of one bowl of Toddy for every such neglect."

The Federal Census of 1790 shows seven families of the name of "Glen"; two, Alexander and John S. are of Ballston, the former having eight in family with no slaves and the latter five in family and six slaves. Two more, Cornelius and Henry, are shown as living in the third ward in Albany, the former having two in family and six slaves and the latter seven in family and seven slaves. John and Isaac are listed under Schenectady, the former having two in family and five slaves and the latter two in family and two slaves. Jacob is shown under the Saratoga Town heading and is credited with five in family and one slave.

This same census shows but one "Sanders" and he is "John" located north of the river at Schenectady with seven in family and four slaves.



BRADT HOUSE

(ROTTERDAM) SCHENECTADY

"Log of the ship Rensselaerwyck on its voyage from Amsterdam to New Netherlands and return, September 25, 1636 - November 7, 1637. - - - November, Sunday 2.

Drifted 16 leagues N. E. by E; the wind about West, the latitude by dead reckoning 41 degrees, 50 minutes, with very high seas. This day the overhang above our rudder was knocked in by the severe storm. This day a child was born on the ship, and named and baptized in England (English) 'Stoerm.' The Mother is annetie barents. The day is gone."



AND so Storm van der Zee (Bradt) was born, the son of Albert Andriesz Bratt, who with his wife, Annetie Barents, were sailing to a new home in a new land. There were two brothers of this name who came early to the Colony from their home in the southeastern part of Norway. They were Albert Andriesz and Arent Andriesz; the former remained in Albany and is the ancestor of most of the families of this name in the Hudson Valley. He is charged on the Rensselaer Manor account books with 250 fl. annual rent for two mills and land on the Normans Kill. His brother Arent became one of the original proprietors of Schenectady in its settlement in 1662, at about which time he died leaving a widow, three sons and three daughters.

The widow received the grants of land at Schenectady which had been allotted to her husband. She was married twice after Arent's death and survived her third husband. She was born Catalina, the daughter of Andries De Vos, a magistrate and Deputy-Director of Rensselaerwyck, and reputed to be a lady of intelligence and education beyond the average of her day. Her pre-nuptial arrangements, providing justly for her children, bear witness to this.

The home lot was on the northeast corner of Washington Avenue and State Street, diagonally opposite the present Van Curler Hotel. In 1725 Catalina's grandson sold this property to Hendrick Vrooman, but it came back into the Bratt family at a

later date to be again disposed of in 1769 to James Shuter and thereafter was called by the Dutch "Shuter's Hookie" (corner). The old Bratt house, typically Dutch with steep roof and a fine brick front, was for almost a century and a half a landmark of old Schenectady, for it definitely survived the massacre of 1690, owing to the fact that some of the French wounded were taken here for shelter. It was torn down about 1895.

Captain Arent (1684-1765), grandson of the original settler, inherited the property and lived and died here. From him the property passed to his three sons all of whom lived on parts of it as it included practically the entire frontage of the block. Harmanies, the third son, lived in the old homestead and at times engaged in Indian trading, though the Bradts as a family were in the brewing business with their brew house located on this property. Harmanies died in 1796, one of the wealthiest men in the town. The year before he died he subscribed £15 to the founding of Union College.

Harmanies' widow was Aeffie Brouwer and it appears that the house passed, after her death in 1802, to Jannetie, her daughter who had in 1787 married Simon DeGraff. Simon inherited it and deeded it to his brother Isaac, who lived here for a long period of years.

The farm lands of this family were widely scattered. Some of it was just east of the village along the Mohawk; some as far away as Niskayuna, and of course they received their interest as representatives of one of the original settlers in the "Great Flat." Their part of this land was in what was later known as Rotterdam.

Samuel, the second son of Arent Andriesz and Catalina De Vos (the original settlers) was born in 1659 and married Susanna, a daughter of Jacques Cornelisze Van Slyke, the trader and tapster. He died about 1741, leaving five sons. His village lot was on Front Street and included the land through which Governor's Lane now passes. Samuel also inherited what was known as "hindmost Lot No. 1." This farm passed to Samuel's son, Arent, who was born in 1684. He married Catherina, a daughter of Jan Pieterse Mebie of Rotterdam (the Woestine), and built the brick house which still stands, as pictured. In the

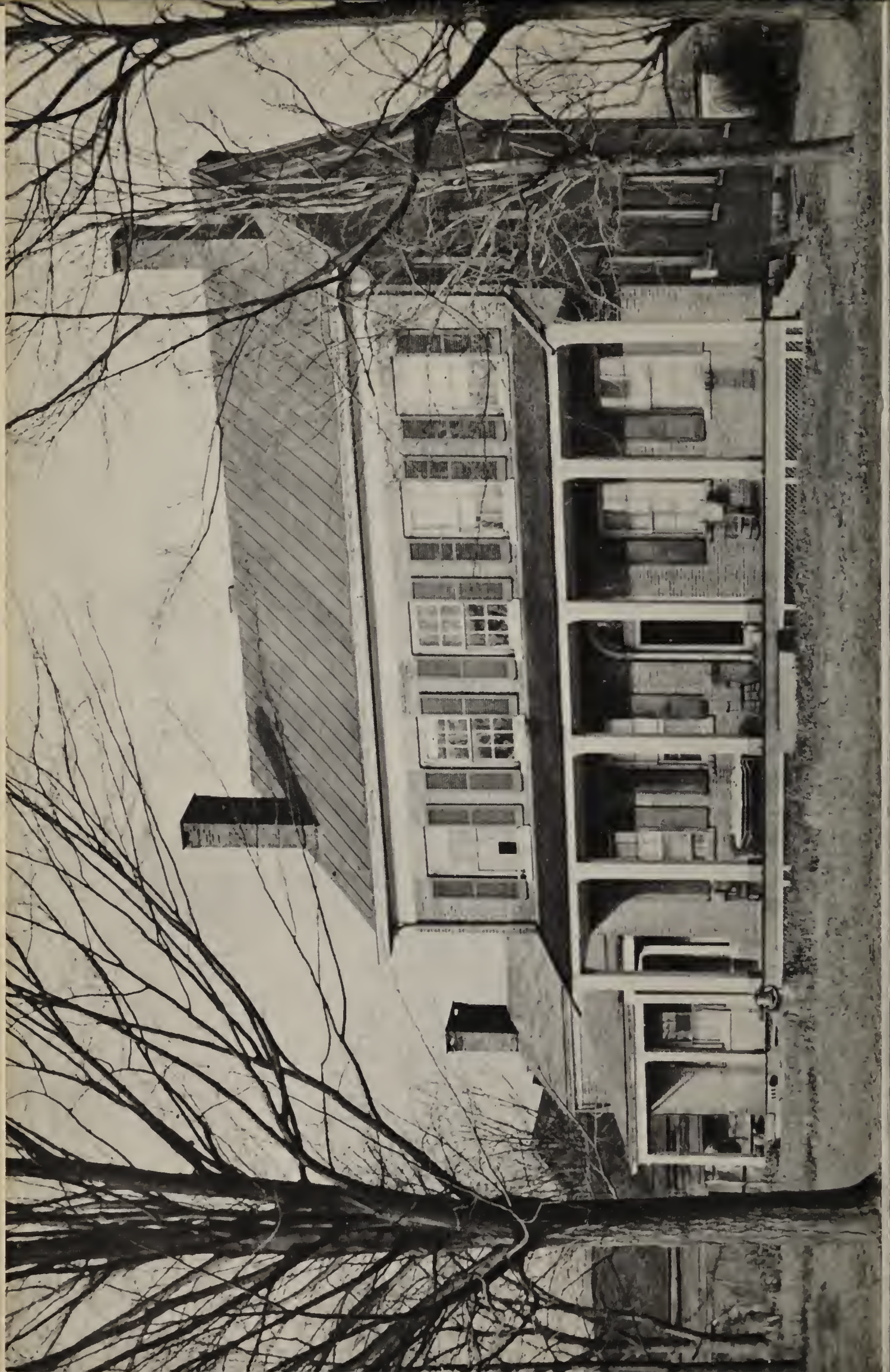
front wall is imbedded a brick upon which has been scratched "A. Bratt, 1736."

The house, after going through a period of gross neglect, has again come into kindly hands and is maintained in excellent condition. It has a central hall, and large lower rooms, in keeping with the huge fireplaces they harbor. There was also a bed alcove at one side of one of these chimneys, the opposite corresponding space being occupied by a cupboard. A simple staircase leads to the upper floor.

On the roster of the Schenectady Regiment at the time of the Revolution the following Bradts are listed: Aaron A., Anthony A., Aphriaem, Arent A., Arent S., Aron B., Charles, Cornelius, Elias, Ephriam, Gerret, Jacobus A., Jacobus B., Jacobus S., John, John S., Mindert, Samuel, and Samuel S. Bradt. There were also Bradts in the service at Albany, one of whom served for a time as "keeper of the Tory gaol."


The heads of families of this name as listed in the Federal census of 1790 at Schenectady, "south of the Mohawk" are Aaron S., Abraham, Anthony, Frederick, Hermanus, Jacobus, John, Nicholas, Samuel, Samuel A., Samuel B., and Winetia Bradt.





THE VAN SLYCK HOUSE

(ROTTERDAM) SCHENECTADY

ORNELIS ANTONISSEN VAN SLEYCK (Slyke) was the original settler of this name in the Mohawk Valley. He came to Rensselaerwyck from Breuckelen near Utrecht in the ship "Eendracht" in 1634 under contract to the Patroon. By trade he was a carpenter and mason, and his account runs through the records of the Manor up to the time of his departure for the settlement of Schenectady, where he was one of the "original proprietors." In addition to his work at these trades, he leased a farm which he seems to have maintained throughout as his residence in the Manor. The farm was located near the Great Flats (north of Albany), for in one of the Patroon's letters he mentions "the place of Broer Cornelis and the Great Flats together . . . contain about 140 morgens according to the survey."

Broer Cornelis must have made it a point to cultivate the friendship of the Indians along both the Hudson and the Mohawk for in 1640 he is mentioned as living part of the time on a tract of land given him by the Mohawks at the site of their old village at Cohoes Falls. In 1646 Director Kieft of the Mannhattans gave him a patent for land at Catskill in recognition of his services as peacemaker with the Indians and also for his influence in obtaining the release of some white men, held captive by them. In 1650 he was chosen to go with Arent Van Curler on an important mission into the "Maquas Country."

In addition to his other activities, Broer Cornelis found time to do considerable trading among the Indians from whom he earned his nickname "Broer" or "Brother," having married a part Indian woman (probably prior to his grant of land at Cohoes) and having been adopted into her tribe. She was Otstoch, the daughter of an Indian squaw whose husband was a French trader named Hartell from the French settlements to the northward, about 1620. Little is known of Hartell and not much more of Otstoch, except that she was called a "Princess" and died on the great island known as Van Slyck's Island. Tradition says she

was a savage beauty and at her death was buried under an old willow tree at the eastern point of the island, opposite the foot of Washington Avenue. The date of her death has not come down to us but Broer Cornelis died in 1676, after having spent much of his later life at Canajoharie among the Indians.

Two sons survived Broer Cornelis, named Cornelis and Jacques. Perhaps Cornelis died early, for history has little to do with him. A third son, Marten, preceded his father in death. Van Slyck's Island, the same on which his mother was buried, was a gift to Marten from the Indians and was patented to Jacques, his brother, by Governor Stuyvesant in 1662, the year Marten died.

Jacques was born at the Indian village in Canajoharie in 1640 and like his father became one of the original proprietors of Schenectady. He died about 1690, and during the most of the fifty years allotted him was very active in the affairs of the settlement and in his trading business. He married Grietje, a daughter of Harmen Janse Ryckman of Albany, by whom he had three sons and six daughters, all living in 1697. Following Jacques' death, Grietje married her brother-in-law, Adam Vrooman, whose wife had been among those slain in the massacre. Jacques was probably the first licensed "tapster" in the village, the privilege to tap at that time being granted by the Governor. The site of this tavern was at Washington Avenue and Cucumber Alley (West Front Street). The latter was a lane which led down to Van Slyck's rope ferry where he crossed to his island to tend his crops. This "tapping" was a lucrative business and many desired the right to sell liquor through the early years and but few were granted it. In 1671 Cornelis Cornelise Viele secured a license to tap because "ye said Aques (Jacques) hath not sufficient accommodation for strangers wch ye said Cornelys Corneluseen Velien doth promise to be well provided of."

He set up his "ordinary" on the south corner of State Street and Mill Lane, next to the church which then stood there. These two were the only "tapsters" in the village until after the death of Arent Van Curler, when out of consideration for Juffrau Van Curler over the loss of her husband by drowning, and the loss of her house and barns by fire, she was allowed to tap.

Broer Cornelis, the original settler, had two daughters, Hilletie and Lea(h), full sisters of Jacques, both of whom inherited the compelling beauty of their mother, Otstoch, the Indian Princess, and both married Dutchmen. Jasper Danckaerts, who made a trip to Rensselaerwyck in 1680, left a journal in which he describes his trip up the Hudson from New York to Albany. While there he stayed with Robert Sanders for a day or two, during which time Sanders took him about, showing him the "Great Falls" at Cohoes and other places of interest such as the Great Flats. Concerning his visit to Schenectady, Danckaerts wrote they

"left Albany about 8 oclock for Schoenechtandeel — a place lying about 24 miles west, or northwest of Albany toward the country of the Mohawks. We rode over a fine sandy cart road through the woods of nothing but beautiful evergreens or fir trees but a light and barren soil."

They reached Schenectady about noon and went to a friend of Robert Sanders. From there Danckaerts speaks of going with Adam Vrooman to see "the flats which are exceedingly rich land."

The next day, Danckaerts' companion being sick, he went again with Sanders to see Adam Vrooman, and while there

"a certain Indian woman or half breed came with a little boy, her child, who was dumb or whose tongue had grown fast. He was about 4 years old. She had heard we were there and had come to ask whether we could do something to cure it . . . Her name was Illetie."

From the long narrative which follows it is evident Danckaerts became interested in her at once. Indeed he says "observing in her that (which) pleased me I asked her to . . . tell her story."

Hilletie (Illetie) Van Slyck tells them at length how she became interested in the Christians and their religion but was dissuaded by her mother who disliked them. Finally there came an open break between them and she left her mother, with whom she was living at the time in the Mohawk Country (Canajo-

harie), and went to live with a woman in Albany, who taught her to read and write. Later she was baptized. About this time she was employed to assist Domine Lydius in interpreting the Gospel to the Indians. She afterward married Pieter Danielse Van Olinda and lived on the east half of the Willow Flats west of Rotterdam. Her sister Leah married Claas Willemse Van Coppernol and lived on the west half. More was said of Leah in connection with her second husband, Jonathan Stevens, and the Stevens house.

The land west of the Great Flats was granted to the early settlers by the Mohawks and consisted of five parts. The first of these was granted to Jacques Cornelise Van Slyck in 1684 and described as "situated between two creeks, one called Stone Creek to the eastward, the other 'Platte Creek' to the westward, come to him in right of his Mother, who was a Mohawk woman," which until recent years belonged to the family, and on which stands this house of Harmon Van Slyck.

Captain Harmanus Van Slyck was the eldest son of Jacques. He married Jannetje, a daughter of Adam Vrooman, in 1704 and died in 1733. From his father, Jacques, he inherited a part of the First Flat. Part of his military service was as a scout with the Mohawks in their war against the French and northern Indians, and as Captain of "the 2nd Foot Company of Schenectady" (of 56 men) recruited in the town. His Lieutenants (in 1715) were Hendrick Vrooman and Jacob Glen and among the privates were the Brouwers, deGraeffs, Meebies, "ficktoor pootman" (Victor Putman), Schermerhorn, Stevens, Swart and others who survived the massacre. Capt. Harmanus had twelve children among whom his property was divided.

Cornelius, another son of Jacques, baptized in 1711, married a Clara Bratt of Albany and also lived on a part of the First Flat. From this marriage sprang a large family of children.

At the time of the Revolution the roster of the Schenectady Regiment included many Van Slycks: Jesse Van Slyck, Cap't., Cornelius A., Cornelius P., Harmanus and Harmanus N. Van Slyke, who were privates. Both Cornelius A. and Cornelius P. served on the Committee of Safety.

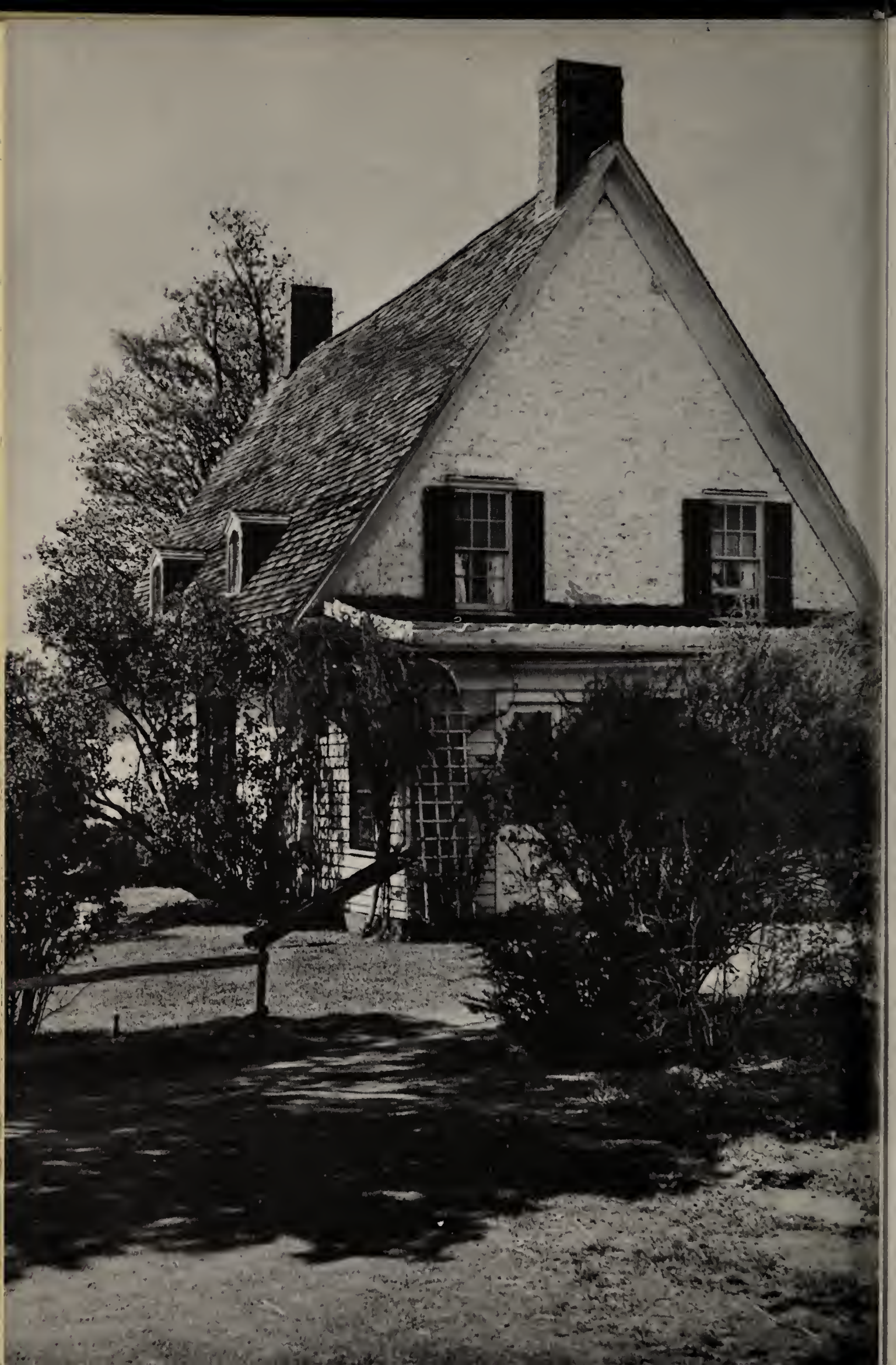
The census of 1790 shows the following heads of families of this name at Schenectady:

Adam,	3 males, 1 female and 1 slave
Adrian,	5 males, 2 females and ? slaves
Anthony,	2 males, 1 female and ? slaves
Cornelius A,	2 males, 3 females and 5 slaves
Hermanus,	2 males, 2 females and 8 slaves
Hermanus,	6 males, 3 females and 1 slave
Jesse,	5 males, 4 females and ? slaves

The house which stands on the farm today is not pre-Revolutionary though it is probable the massively framed barn with its steeply pitched roof and low hung eaves but recently demolished was that old. To the southeast of the house on the slope of the meadow is a family cemetery. The burials are all following 1800, unless there be some whose markers are destroyed.



THE "VAN SLYCK" COAT OF ARMS



THE MABIE HOUSE

ROTTERDAM JUNCTION

IN 1670 Daniel Janse Van Antwerp bought the land on which this old house stands. It was known as the third flat, and is about a mile east of the town of Rotterdam. Van Antwerp, or "Van Antwerpen," as it was then spelled, was born in Holland in 1635 and about twenty-five years later located at Beverwyck (Albany). He was a trader, well liked by the Indians, and a man of some ability and prominence. A few years following his arrival in Schenectady he was one of the five justices of the Village and later became one of the supervisors. His village lot and home was at the northeast corner of Church and Union Streets and is described as:

"containing in length on the east side where it butts to the Lott of Ground now belonging to Jellis Van Vorst two hundred foot and on the South Side by the Highway one hundred foot and on the west Side Like wise by the High (way) and on the North side abutting the Lott now in possession of John Peterson Mabee."

He occupied the lot prior to 1671, at which time he was given a patent. In 1715 he granted it to the Dutch Church for "good causes and consideration him there unto moving."

In 1680 Governor Dongan granted him another patent covering his farm and in 1706 he sold the west half of it to Jan Pieterse Mebie. The date of Van Antwerp's death is uncertain. He made his will in 1744 and was survived by five sons and three daughters, all of whom had issue and from whom the family name has spread throughout the land.

Jan Pieterse Mebie, the purchaser, came to Schenectady about 1684 and married Anna Pieterse, daughter of Pieter Jacobse Borsboom. He occupied his town lot prior to 1690 when the town was burned. He died in 1725 leaving three sons and five daughters.

This old house at Rotterdam is beyond a doubt the finest example of its type in the Valley. It is the oldest house west of the Hudson and while its exact age is uncertain one would judge from remaining records that it was built by Mebie after he

bought from Van Antwerp (in 1706) the land on which it stands. The deed to this land refers to Van Antwerp's own house and locates the land he is selling to Mebie as lying west of it. Therefore it would seem that the Van Antwerp name used in connection with this house is erroneous.

The walls of the old house are of stone, laid up carefully and without mortar, the outside being merely "painted" up and the inside plastered, to the height of one story. The steepness of the roof, however, provides head-room for a second story and even an attic above. The west gable end is clapboarded, but the east gable end is built entirely of stone. The heavy and wide boards (indeed they should be called "planks") forming the floor of the second story have been smoothly planed and rest on massive beams as seen from below. The house faces the east and consists of two rooms on each floor with a chimney on the ground floor, this being exclusive of a recent addition on the north or river side. The fireplaces are quaint in their simplicity and are bordered by a primitive wood facing. An enclosed stairway, as steep as a ladder, leads to the attic story.

Some twenty feet from the southwest corner of the house is a brick building said to have been built as a dwelling for the slaves owned by the Mebies. There is a basement with a fireplace in this building. The ground floor is one large room with another similar one above, reached by a narrow enclosed stairway.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the main house is its excessively steep and unbroken roof line, further accentuated by the moderate width of the building and by the two small dormer windows which pierce the great expanse of roof.

The census of 1790 shows the following heads of families living at Schenectady bearing the two old Dutch names which are associated with this and the adjoining farm:

	Males		Females	Slaves
	over 16	under 16		
Garrit Van Antwerp	2	1	3	0
Simon Van Antwerp	2	2	5	?
Abraham Van Antwerp	2	—	2	2
Aaron Mabie	2	2	4	1
John Mabie	2	—	2	7
Hester Mabie	1	1	7	?

The military records reveal at least six men by the name of Van Antwerp who were enrolled during the Revolution and at least twelve by the name of Mabie. There seems to have been a branch of the Mabie family established at an early date near Cornwall, then in Ulster County, which is not included in these records.





THE SWART HOME

HOFFMAN'S FERRY

TEUNIS CORNELISSE SWART signed the original petition for land at Schenectady by his mark, being one of five of the fourteen petitioners so to sign. He was one of two sons of Gerrit Swart born in 1607 who came to New Netherlands in 1652. His home lot was at the northeast corner of Church and State Streets where about a century later Daniel Campbell built his house, a present-day landmark. His wife was Elizabeth Van der Linde.

In addition to his home lot, he was assigned Lot 10 on the "Great Flats" for his farm. This lay west of the land now enclosed within the grounds of the General Electric Company. He died at his home in the village in 1686 leaving three sons and two daughters.

Cornelius, the eldest son, moved to Ulster County and sold his father's home lot, except for a piece off the north end fronting Church Street which passed to his brother Esaias.

This Esaias was the immediate ancestor of most of the Swarts of the Mohawk Valley. He married Eva, a daughter of Teunis Van Woert of Albany, and surviving them were three sons and one daughter. These children were: Teunis, the oldest son, who married Christina, a daughter of Adam Vrooman, in 1710. Teunis settled in the Schoharie Valley. Wouter, a second son, married Elizabeth, daughter of Jeremi Thickstone, who lived on the south side of the Mohawk near Hoffman's Ferry. Esaias, the third son, born February 27th, 1704, married Elizabeth, daughter of Arent Vedder, on December 13th, 1731, and settled on the north side of the Valley on the 6th flat just east of Hoffman's Ferry, receiving a patent for the land from the Trustees of Schenectady on August 15th, 1713. These patents all carried with them an obligation called "quit rent" which in this case amounted to £6-19-6. In addition to his arable land he was also granted sixty acres of wood land. He still maintained a home in the Village, it being a part of his father's lot on Church Street.

The west line of this sixth flat is the small kill or creek called the Verfkill just west of the highway bridge over the New York



Central tracks. An historical marker on the south edge of the road identifies it. On the flat, or farm, at the north of the road stands the house pictured. It was built about 1792 by Nicholas Swart.

The census of 1790 shows the following heads of families living north of the river, which was used as a dividing line to set the village of Schenectady apart:

Jacob Swart —

2 males over 16; 3 males under 16; 4 females; 0 slaves

Nicholas Swart —

2 males over 16; 2 males under 16; 5 females; 1 slave

Thunis Swart —

3 males over 16; 5 males under 16; 2 females; 0 slaves

Teunis lived east of the Nicholas Swart house, on the river bank. His was a brick house. No doubt it was the one in which he kept a tavern, for on April 19th, 1777, he was appointed to receive a "Luysense to Keep A Public House or Teveron." The house was fortified and garrisoned during the war. It was taken down about 1873. Captain Teunis left an enviable reputation for loyal and efficient military service. He died prior to 1832.

Along the State Highway about a mile west of the underpass west from Scotia a marker was set by the State to commemorate the blockhouse. It reads:

"TINKER HILL"

"Site of blockhouse near
river bank, built by
Capt. Teunis Swart. Stockaded
and armed with field piece
in War of Revolution."

This Teunis was a son of the Teunis Swart who married Christina Vrooman. Adam Vrooman secured some very large grants of Schoharie Valley land from the Indians, which were subsequently recognized and a patent issued for them. This land lay well up the Valley above Middleburg, and Adam himself went to live on it taking with him his son Peter and Teunis Swart, his son-in-law. This was the birthplace of Captain Teunis, his grandson.

The "field" piece referred to on the State marker later became a contested possession of the younger men in the neighboring villages of Scotia, Glenville and Charlton. They used it in their Fourth of July celebrations which at the time were vociferous holidays. The cannon was always loaded as heavily as possible to produce the greatest amount of noise. One of these charges was more than the old piece could withstand and it lost a part of its muzzle. But what remained was used as though nothing had happened. Finally, in the possession of the Glenville group, it was again loaded to the limit and the charge heavily tamped. This time it burst into a thousand pieces, but fortunately no one was hurt. Until recent years an old elm tree carried a scar caused by one of the flying fragments.

Nicholas had a military record as did three others of this name, James, Jonas and Jacobus. James and Jonas seem to have left the neighborhood or to have died prior to 1790, for their names do not appear in the Federal Census of that date. Nicholas, who owned the house pictured, died in 1825.






SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON'S COAT OF ARMS
From his bookplate



SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON

AMSTERDAM

OLUMES have been written about this man and more will be written. What follows here serves only to introduce to you Sir William Johnson of Fort Johnson.

William Johnson, born in Ireland in 1715, came to America in 1738 when but a lad of 23 years old to manage an estate of some several thousand acres that had come into the possession of his uncle, Admiral Peter Warren of the Royal Navy. This land lay along the south bank of the Mohawk in the town of Florida, opposite the present Amsterdam. Here he made his first home at what was called Warren's Bush or Johnson's Settlement. Sir Peter Warren was a brother-in-law of Oliver De Lancy, an important man of his time, and it was largely through his aid that Admiral Peter came into possession of this enormous grant of some 16,000 acres.

To understand young William's immediate success in this undertaking it is necessary to understand the man. It is said he was sent to America to break up an attachment he had already formed for a sweet Irish lass. But if this be so, it was not long before she was well out of his mind, or at least comfortably stowed away at the back of it. Honest and fair dealings won him the immediate friendship of all with whom he had transactions and especially so with the Indians, who were so often the victims of crafty traders. The Mohawks said of him after long acquaintance: "He never deceived us." He was most democratic in his manner of living. This side of his nature perhaps paid him bigger dividends in the way of material gain than any other trait he possessed.

His intimacies with the squaws and daughters of the chiefs and for which he has been so severely criticized was simply the continuance of an old custom the Indians granted any distinguished guest among them — the visitor's choice of squaw or maiden. Sir William had a rich scarlet blanket bound with gold lace. This he wore when transacting business with the Indians;

and being a partial adoption of their own style of dress, it flattered and pleased them very much. To his intimates he often boasted of the scenes to which that blanket had been a silent witness. The fact that he was able to live among them, speak their language, paint, dress, and dance their dances, play their games, hunt and fish with them, gained for him a power over them that was never equalled by any other white man.

And if Johnson lived with the Indians, it is equally certain they lived with him! His later houses were filled to overflowing with the Indians; and throughout his long and active career we find Johnson mentioning this fact in his correspondence and complaining that his entertainment of the Indians was a heavy burden on his private purse. He was continually receiving supplies from the Governor to be used as gifts to the Indians, to "keep the peace chain bright," for he was soon appointed Superintendent in charge of Indian affairs for the Crown.

He lived at Warren's Bush some five years and succeeded in disposing of about two-thirds of his uncle's land. About 1740 he bought a large tract of land himself, on the north side of the river — extending westerly from present Amsterdam.

Johnson's first "wife" was a young German immigrant named Catherine Weisenberg, a Palatine orphan, who made the passage binding herself to the captain of the vessel for a term sufficient to pay this indebtedness, which was then a common custom. The captain would assist the immigrant to find a position, and the employer reimbursed the captain for the immigrant's passage in lieu of wages until the debt had been paid.

In this case Catherine secured a position with a Mr. Phillips, two miles east of Johnson's home. Here Johnson met the girl, bought her for £5 and took her to his home. From this union there were three children, Anne, John and Mary, all baptized in the Fort Hunter Chapel in the name of Weisenberg, and no mention made of Sir William's name then, nor subsequently, nor was the marriage recorded in any church record, though it is said he married Catherine on her deathbed. Her first two children, John (later Sir John), and Anne (commonly called Nancy and later Col. Claus' wife) were born on the south side of the river. Nothing remains of this house and little or nothing is known of the manner of its construction though the site is

marked. Mary, the second daughter, became the wife of her cousin, Guy Johnson.

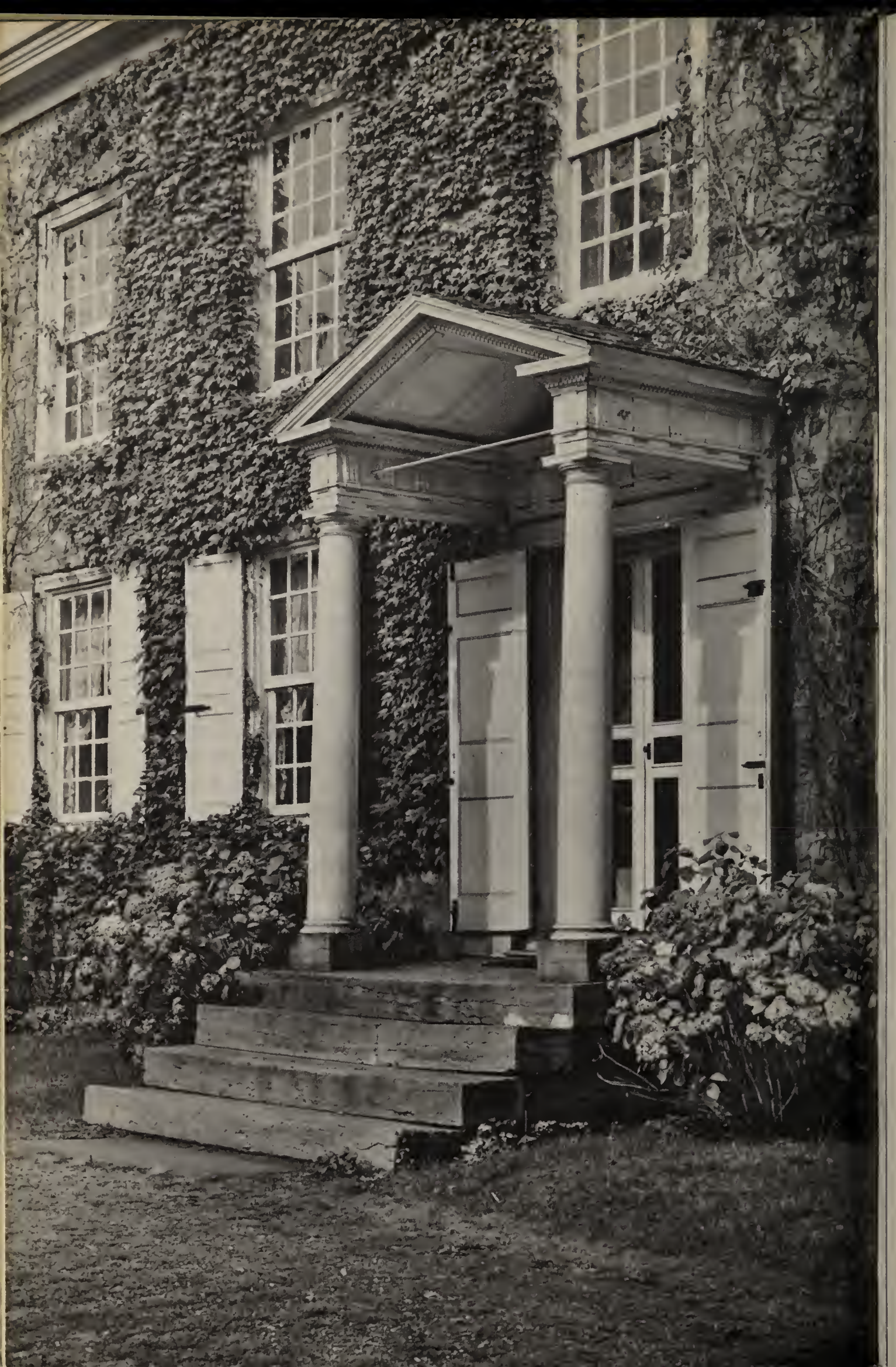
Mount Johnson, Sir William's first house north of the river, was on his own property. It was a stone house, built about 1742, and stood a mile east of the present Fort Johnson, which he built in 1749 on the west bank of that tumbling little stream, Kayderosseras Creek.

Catherine Weisenberg died at Fort Johnson about 1749 and was buried in the garden, so the legend goes. A more recent addition to the story is to the effect that a subsequent owner of the property, searching for her grave, raised a stone now used as a door-step at the south entrance of the house. This stone, still there, is identical with others brought to this vicinity as tombstones. It is cut in a similar shape, about four feet by six, its top edges rounded; in fact it lacks nothing but the inscription, which leads one to believe that this was quite possibly the tombstone of Catherine Weisenberg, removed from an earlier location to serve another purpose.

It was at Mount Johnson that Sir William and Catherine lived while Fort Johnson was being built. It was something of a tragedy that Catherine died at so early an age after a life that must have held much of downright hard toil through Sir William's lean years and was not permitted to share with him the later years which brought his greater glories. Of all Sir William's children by his several wives, hers were of greatest prominence in later life, yet she knew them only as infants.

Caroline Hendrick, a daughter of the Mohawk Chief Abraham and a niece of King Hendrick, was Sir William's next choice to share his home. She bore him three children and died about 1752.

His third "wife" was Molly Brant, daughter of the widow Brant by a former husband. Both Molly and her famous brother, Joseph, were children of their mother's first marriage to a full-blooded Mohawk Chief of the Wolf tribe, and were grandchildren of one of the Mohawk chieftains taken to the Court of London in 1710 by Colonel Schuyler of Albany. Molly, "Miss Molly" or the "Brown Lady Johnson" as she is known to history, came to Fort Johnson about 1753. She bore Sir William eight children who survived and are mentioned in Sir William's will.



After his death Molly moved to the Canajoharie Castle, which had been the home of her people. At the time of the Revolution she fled to Canada, following her people of the Mohawk nation.

Sir William, a Colonel in 1754, attended a military conference held in Albany in June in the hope of uniting the efforts of the colonists against the French who dominated the land west of the Alleghenies. The Six Nations were also in attendance and its terms were made satisfactory to them. King Hendrick, chief sachem of the Mohawks, was present and his speech has been preserved. He urged speedy action to fortify the outlying settlements, and in his speech can be seen the friendship and esteem in which Colonel Johnson was held by his Indian neighbors.

"We beg you will resolve upon something speedily. You are not safe from danger one day. The French have their hatchets in their hands both at Ohio and at two places in New England. We don't know but this very night they may attack us. Since Colonel Johnson has been in the city there has been a French Indian at his home (Ft. Johnson) who took measure of the wall around it, and made very narrow observations on everything thereabouts. We think Colonel Johnson in very great danger, because the French will take more than ordinary pains to kill him or take him prisoner both on account of his great interest among us and because he is one of our Sachems.

Brethern, there is an affair about which our hearts tremble and our minds are deeply concerned. We refer to the selling of rum in our Castles. It destroys many, both of our old and young people. We are in great fear about this rum. It may cause murder on both sides. We, the Mohawks of both Castles request that the people who are settled about us may not be suffered to sell our people rum. It keeps them all poor and makes them idle and wicked. If they have any money or goods, they lay all out in rum. It destroys virtue and the progress of religion among us."

In closing his speech he flayed the English for their lack of energy and accomplishment. Said he:

“We would have gone and taken Crown Point but you hindered us. Look at the French; they are men. They are fortifying everywhere. But you, and we are ashamed to say it, you are like women — bare and open without any fortifications.”

Colonel William Johnson became “Sir William” following the victorious Battle of Lake George in 1755, in recognition of his distinguished services. In this same year, at a congress of governors at Alexandria, General Braddock urged and secured the appointment of Colonel William Johnson as Superintendent of Indian affairs. Braddock immediately advanced Johnson £2,000 to pursue the work. Johnson was in attendance at the meeting. To live in a style befitting a titled gentleman, he built Johnson Hall at Johnstown in 1762 and here he died.

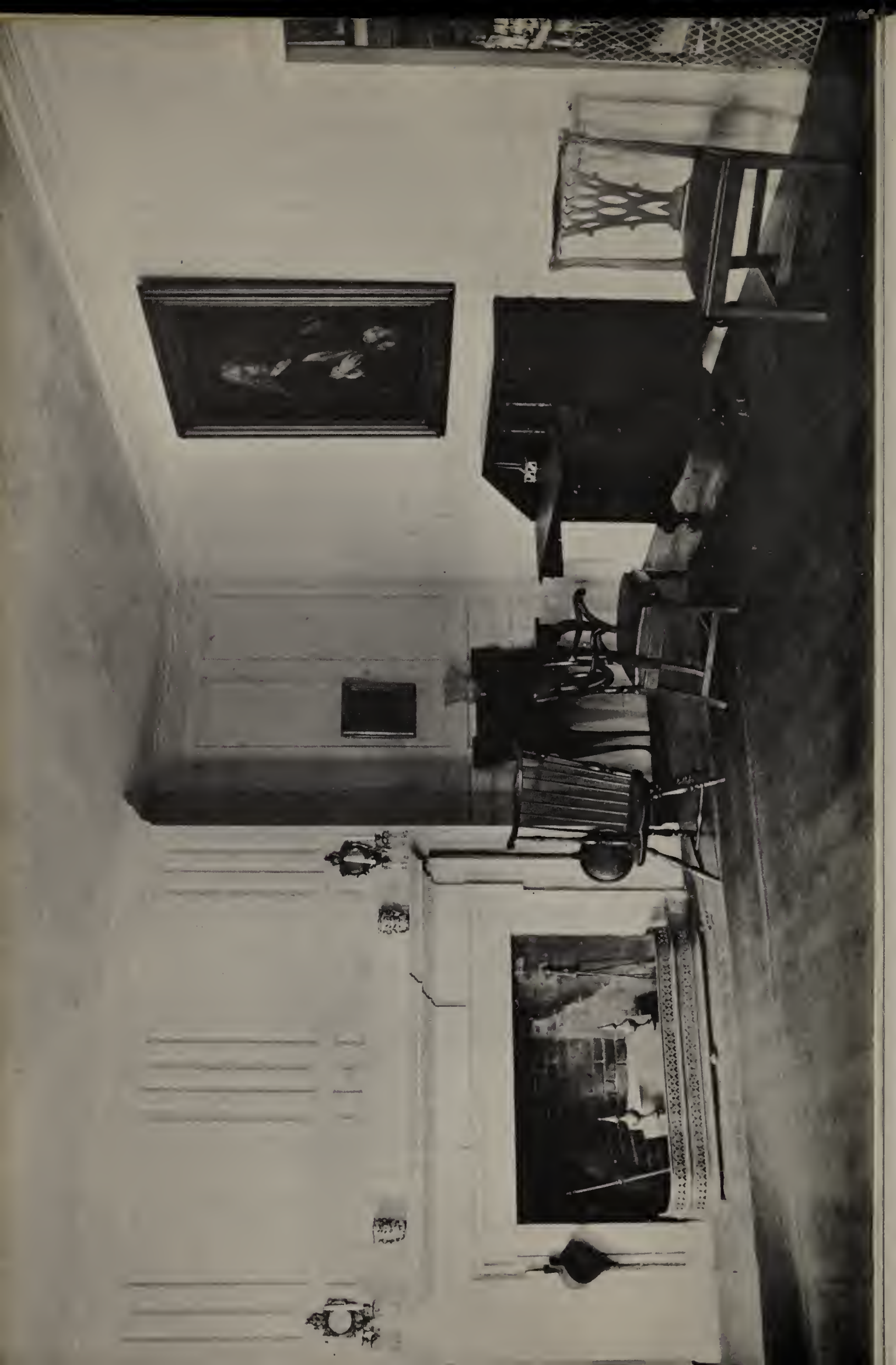
Sir William was public-spirited, open-handed and co-operative in promoting any worthy project, and in his official capacity was an outstanding success, particularly so in his commanding influence over the Indians. As a military leader he was successful at the Battle of Lake George, at the capture of Fort Niagara, and again at the capture of Montreal.

With masterly strategy and diplomacy Sir William brought about peace with Pontiac at Oswego, averting what would have been a far-flung Indian uprising with its fearful consequences to the English. This peace treaty is the highlight of his control over the Indians.

His death was dramatic in its suddenness. He had been in council with the Indians in spite of illness; the day had been hot (it was July 11th, 1774). But the situation would bear no delay; 600 Indians were gathered at the Hall. After two hours of most emphatic speaking, he was seized with spasms of pain and was carried indoors. He died two hours later, “of a suffocation,” wrote Guy Johnson, though the report of the Council at Albany called it “a fit of some kind.” His physician diagnosed it as a “stoppage of the gall-duct.” His last words were to Joseph Brant, “Joseph, control thy people, I am going away.”

He was buried, at his own request, beneath the altar of the stone church at Johnstown which he had erected in 1771. The body was placed in a mahogany casket, all being within a lead container. A fire destroyed the church in 1836 and as the place of burial was outside the wall of the new church, for a time the grave was lost. It was finally discovered and within the decayed casket were some remains and a gold ring inscribed "June 1739-16," the significance of which is still unexplained. This ring is now a treasured possession at Johnson Hall. The remains were reinterred just south of the present Church, the grave being marked by simple stones.





FORT JOHNSON

AT FORT JOHNSON

THIS BUILDING, just west of Amsterdam, as well as Johnson Hall at Johnstown, which was the later residence of Sir William Johnson, are perhaps the two most interesting pre-Revolutionary residences in the Mohawk Valley. Here, at Fort Johnson, Sir William lived some fourteen years from 1749 to 1763, when he removed to his newly completed home at Johnstown.

Of the two, Fort Johnson is perhaps the more interesting. It is earlier and its construction evidences the fact. It was the home of a man whose star was in its ascendancy. Before he left this home he personally controlled the Indian population inhabiting the eastern section of the continental forest, which formed the hazy boundary of Colonial America.

Sir William built his house strongly, of fieldstone, to serve as a fortress in the wilderness. It is of two stories, surmounted by an attic, and was covered by a lead roof which the Colonists removed and moulded into bullets after confiscating the estate at the outbreak of the Revolution. Its simple rectangular dimensions are 64 feet by 34 feet with a hall through the center. To the right, on entering, is the oak staircase leading to the second floor. Much of the wood work and panelling on the first floor is of black walnut now painted white, while that on the second floor is of cherry, some painted and some left in the natural color of the wood. On each side of the halls of both floors are equal rooms to right and left, warmed by simple fireplaces. To the rear of these rooms are long narrow rooms on either side, the arrangement being the same on both floors. These smaller rooms, hardly more than halls, were no doubt used as living quarters for the family.

On the ground floor at the left is what probably served as a reception room. To the right was the dining room. Together with the broad hall which separates them they form a perfect suite and must have been an admirable setting for the affairs, both formal and informal, for which Sir William was noted.

A basement, divided into two rooms by a heavy stone wall, underlies the entire house. Here, no doubt, was storage for food and drink. Entrance to it is by a very steep stairway at the rear of the hall. There was also an outside cellarway.

The exterior, as it faces southerly along the highway, is impressive in its simplicity and is immediately recognized by anyone as a building of significance. The unique triangular placement of its three dormer windows, the massive appearance of its obviously heavy stone walls and the beautifully proportioned portico all command immediate attention. The heavily paneled shutters were made to cover and protect its equally spaced windows.

Following Sir William's departure, the home was occupied by his son, Sir John, until Sir William's death in 1774, at which time Sir John moved to the more recently completed house known as Johnson Hall, where his father had died.

Then came the Revolution and with it the confiscation of Tory estates. Aaron Burr visited Fort Johnson soon after his marriage in 1782 with an idea of purchasing it. His description of the property, in a letter to his wife, is interesting; the conclusion, reached in his last sentence, is because she had vetoed the idea:

"I should have told you that I am speaking of Fort Johnson where I have spent the day. From this amiable bower you ascend a gentle declivity by a winding path to a cluster of lofty oaks and locusts. Here Nature assumes a more august appearance. The gentle brook which murmurs soft below, here bursts into a cataract. Here you behold the stately Mohawk roll its majestic wave along the lofty Appalachians. Here the mind assumes a nobler tone and is occupied by sublimer objects. What there was of tenderness here swells to rapture. It is truly charming. . . .

In short then, my Theo, the beauty of this same Fort Johnson, the fertility of the soil, the commodiousness and elegance of the buildings, the great value of the mills, and the very unconsiderable price which was asked for the whole have not induced me to purchase it and never will."

The old fort has had many owners but is now occupied by the Montgomery County Historical Society as a period house, open to the public. It was purchased and presented to the Society by Brigadier-General John Watts DePeyster, a lineal descendant of Major Stephen Watts, a brother-in-law of Sir John Johnson. Its furnishings are in taste and of the period, some of them having been the property of the Johnson family.

The weathering of two centuries and perhaps the "heap o' living" the old house has known has permeated it with an atmosphere which must be felt by anyone in tune with its storied past.





JOHNSON HALL

JOHNSTOWN

MANY reasons have been given in explanation of why Sir William Johnson built a home in this location, which at the time was a wilderness. Some say because here was the intersection of six Indian trails and therefore a future crossroads and a logical place for a settlement. And no doubt Sir William did consider this when planning the erection of his new estate. Others say the principal reason was to live more centrally within the bounds of his enormous land holdings. All agree he wanted a home of greater elegance than he contemplated when he built Fort Johnson. It was to be more in keeping with his position of advanced importance and a suitable place in which to entertain the socially and politically great of both the Old World and the New. No doubt these were factors, but another reason must have been a desire to live apart from his son John. Not that there was undue friction between them, but it was certain that John would marry and naturally Sir William hoped he would marry "well." And how satisfactorily John's wife would adapt herself to Sir William's mode of living must have been a moot question.

Johnson Hall, finished in 1762, is a frame structure, its plank siding marked off to imitate stone blocks. In 1763 there was an Indian uprising under Chief Pontiac, the powerful leader of the more western tribes not so completely under Sir William's control. Therefore the two stone blockhouses were built (separate buildings) spaced perhaps twenty feet from the Hall which stood equidistant between them. One of these blockhouses remains today, the only original structure of its kind in the Valley.

The buildings face an open, shaded lawn which slopes away to the north and east. On the front lawn is a circle of lilacs said to be from the original strain planted by Sir William himself. Within this circle and on this expansive lawn which surrounds the house were held the Indian councils. Here the Indians came and camped, actually by the thousands, debating important questions which Sir William was called upon to settle. These were



often the old grievances of land grabbing, unfair dealings, boundary treaties and questions of loyalty and allegiance to the English Crown.

Other small buildings across a small creek housed some fifteen slaves who worked the land. There were also a personal physician, a butler, a surveyor and a musician or two.

The house is colonial in its lines, with a sloping roof facing each of its four sides. A hall, fifteen feet wide, runs directly through the building with a Palladian window over the stair landing. Its lines are decidedly less the fortified home and more the elaborate country seat of an important gentleman. At the time he built, Sir William was apparently but little concerned with the safety of his exposed frontier establishment. He felt assured of his control over the Six Nations; the French had been defeated, so all seemed peaceful. The later uprising under Pontiac was a direct result of injudicious (to use a word far too mild) treatment of the western Indians by the English, who committed grievous mistakes in their dealings with them. As was so often the case, it was a sort of behavior not at all in accord with Sir William's policies, though he was called upon to settle such disputes. It was because of this unforeseen danger that Sir William built his blockhouses. The fact that he built them proved the seriousness of the situation as he saw it. Yet even here he might have spared himself the expense. His almost unbelievable influence over the Six Nations, coupled with his personal appeal to Pontiac at Oswego, was sufficient to accomplish a peace which all feared could be reached only by defeating the Indians in another bloody frontier war.

On either side of the Hall as one enters are large rooms. On the right, at the rear, was Sir William's library, the room in which he died after a dramatic and exhausting speech made with great physical effort. In front of this room is the dining-room. An inconspicuous stairway leads to the kitchen directly below. The rooms on the left are drawing room and bedroom. The hall, as well as the rooms, is paneled. A large and dignified stairway with landing leads to the second floor.

The rear rooms on the second floor are bedrooms. One of the front rooms was used as the Masonic Lodge, of which Sir



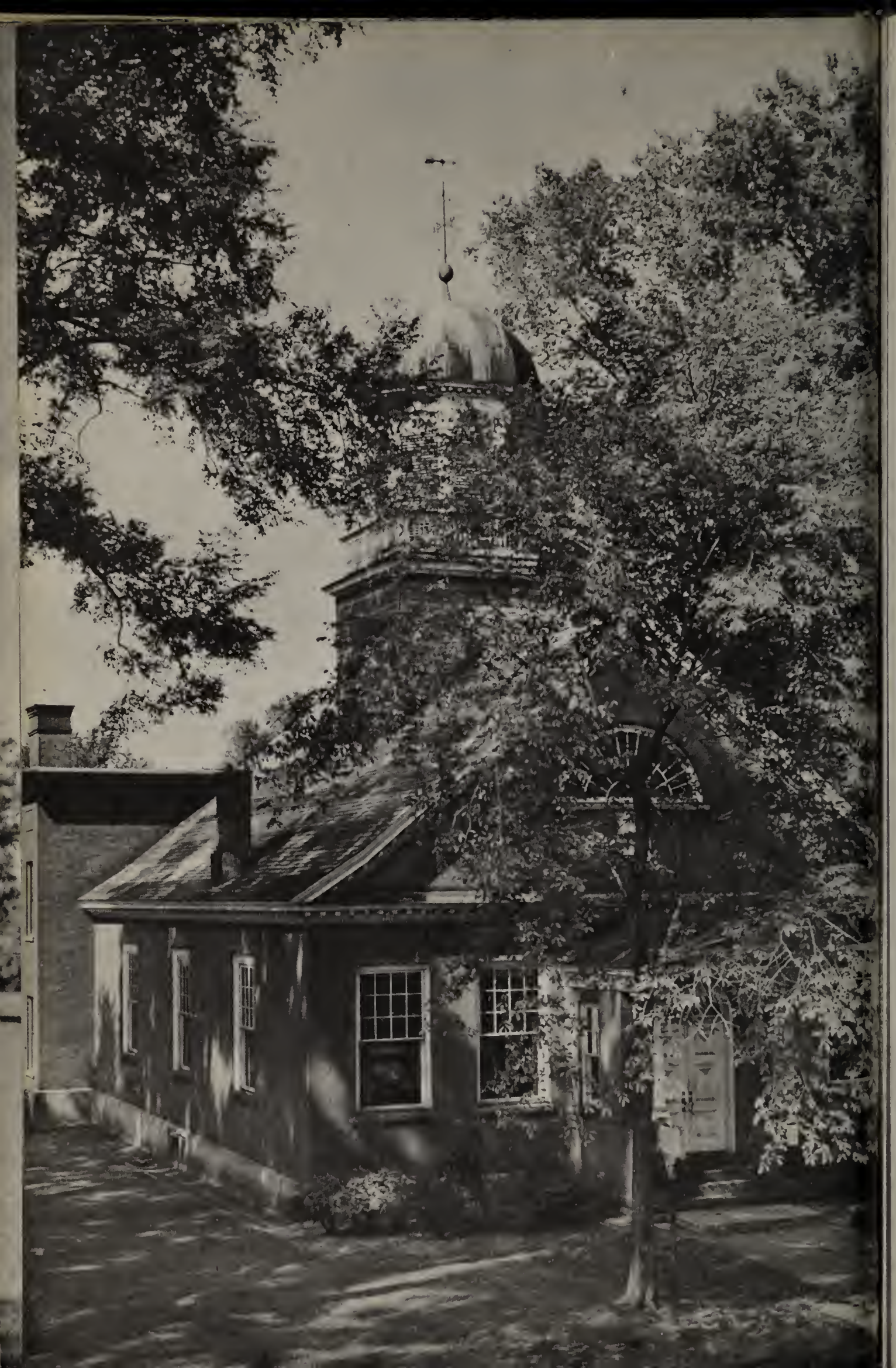
William was first Master. Opposite is another large room which legend has termed the "council room."

Leading from the hall to the attic is a narrow stairway. This attic is a large open space which often accommodated members of the family when the four second floor rooms were filled.

The basement has been so entirely renovated as to destroy any illusion of age. There was an inside well here to insure an adequate water supply, so the story goes, but all signs of it have disappeared. The space was devoted to a kitchen, wine and storage cellars, and a servants' hall.

The property was purchased by the State of New York in 1907, when the house was repaired and the exterior restored. It is now open to the public as a museum composed of a collection of local memorabilia, among which are many items once the property of members of the Johnson family.





TRYON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

JOHNSTOWN

THE LAW which created Tryon County in 1772 also authorized the appropriation of £1,000 for a courthouse and a jail, to which an additional £600 was made available the following year. Sir William superintended the construction of the buildings, employing a man by the name of Bennet brought from England to take charge of the details. After construction was under way, a man named Zephaniah Bachellor, a carpenter who also had some ability as an architect, came from Boston to Johnstown and found employment. Sir William was heard to remark later that he liked Bachellor's work, whose success, he felt sure, was due in a measure to his personal happiness. Bachellor had fallen in love and married a Johnstown maid and so became a permanent citizen of the town.

The plans for the building were drawn by Samuel Fuller of Schenectady, who designed Johnson Hall and other buildings for Sir William. A glimpse of Fuller's relationship with Sir William may be had from the following letter dated almost ten years prior to the date of the courthouse, proving that Samuel Fuller's work must have been satisfactory.

Fort Johnson, May 8th, 1763.

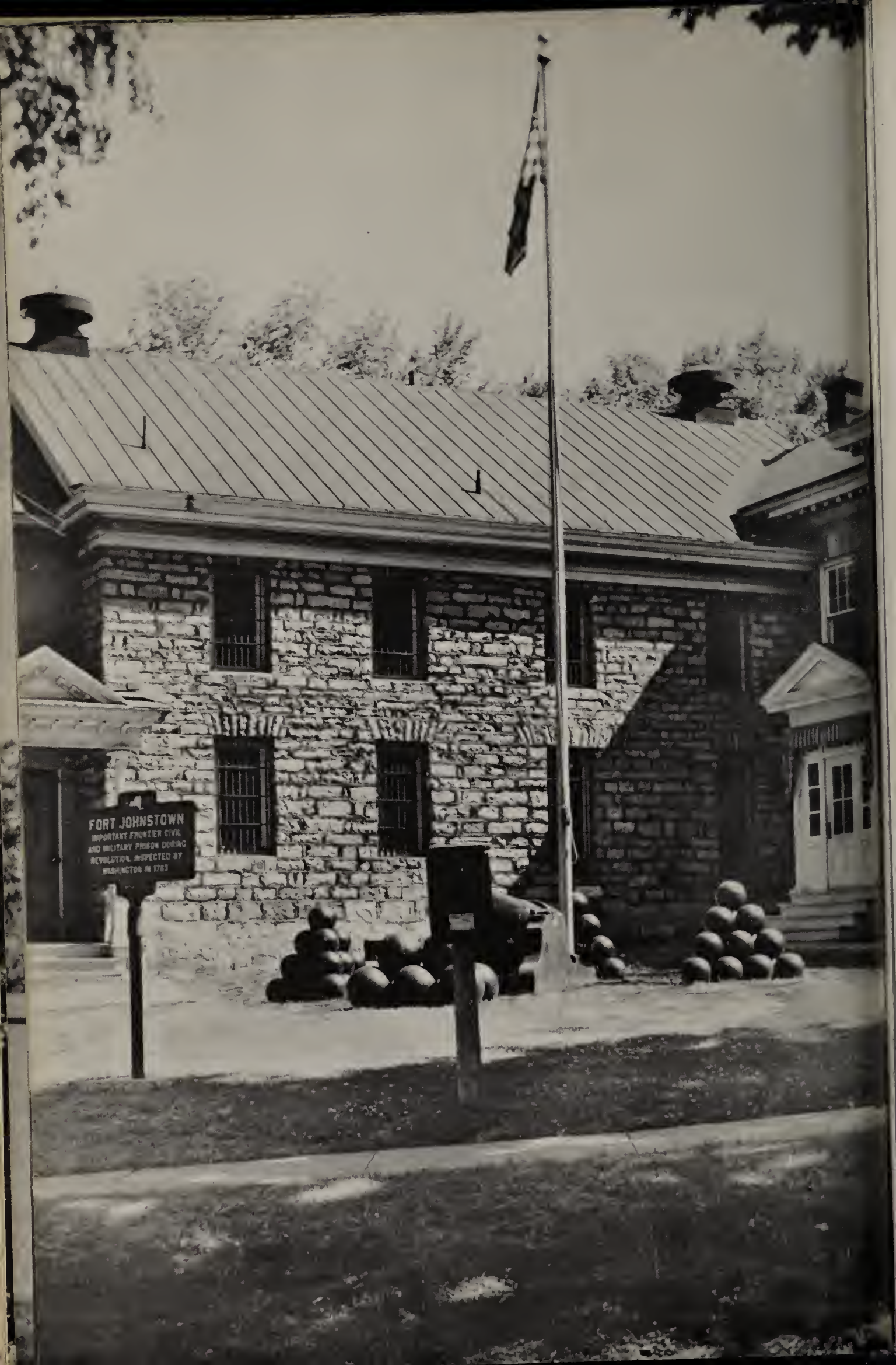
Mr. Fuller:

My reason for coming here this Day was to agree with the Workmen whom you intend taking into the Woods with You, and as I had not an Opertunity of Seeing you or them, I leave this paper to let you know that I am determined to give no more than five Shillings per Day to any whom you may employ for my work; if they will not agree to that, I desire you will not bring them with you. Neither will I give more to any (Yourself excepted) who work at Cap't Claus' House. What I have promised you shall be paid.

I am y'rs

(Signed) Wm. Johnson.

The cornerstone was laid June 26th, 1772, in the presence of Governor Tryon, Sir William, their ladies and a large gathering



FORT JOHNSTOWN
IMPORTANT FRONTIER CIVIL
AND MILITARY PRISON DURING
REVOLUTION. INSPECTED BY
WASHINGTON IN 1783

of citizens. This Governor Tryon was the last English governor of the Colony, and the County was named for him. At that time it comprised about eight million acres and was subtracted from Albany County, which previously had extended westward to the Indian lands, bounded by treaty limits.

In 1784 the name of the County was changed to "Montgomery" in honor of General Montgomery, who lost his life in the unsuccessful attempt to capture Quebec. Governor Tryon became so unpopular through his antagonistic activities (he had earned the nickname of "Bloody Billy") that the people insisted upon the change. Thus it was that Tryon County existed for a period of but twelve years, from the years of fomentation preceding the Revolution to the well-earned peace and quiet which followed. Of all the war-torn arenas over which the battles swept, none was more bitterly contested nor more brutally ravaged by savage cruelty than Tryon County.

The courthouse was completed and a Court of Quarter Sessions convened on September 8th, 1772. Guy Johnson was the presiding judge. Later in this building the famous Southwick trial was held, Aaron Burr defending Southwick. Daniel Cady, Ebenezer Foote and Abraham Van Vechten were some of the other well-known attorneys present. Burr was at this time heartily disliked for his killing of Alexander Hamilton in their duel and it was thought Burr's appearance might provoke a disorderly demonstration, but no sound was heard. Hamilton was known in Johnstown and had appeared in the very room in which the trial was being held. Burr entered followed by a negro servant carrying an armful of books. He was a rather small, neatly dressed and dignified gentleman with powdered wig, who appeared quietly confident before the bar. He smiled at Judge Kent, who was then presiding, made an easy and graceful bow and took his seat. Southwick was acquitted.

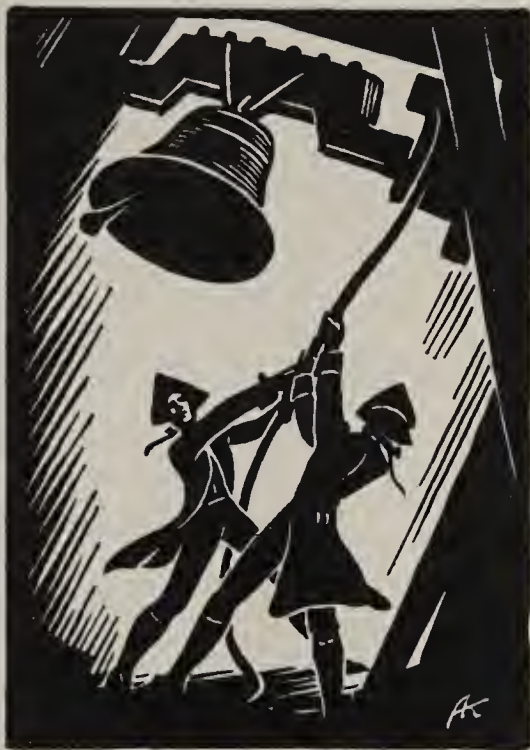
It has often been said the bricks that went into the building were imported from Holland as is the case with so many of the buildings of this early period, but this is not true. The bricks were made on the farm of Jacob Yost, less than a half mile from the site of the building. In the cupola is the triangle, which

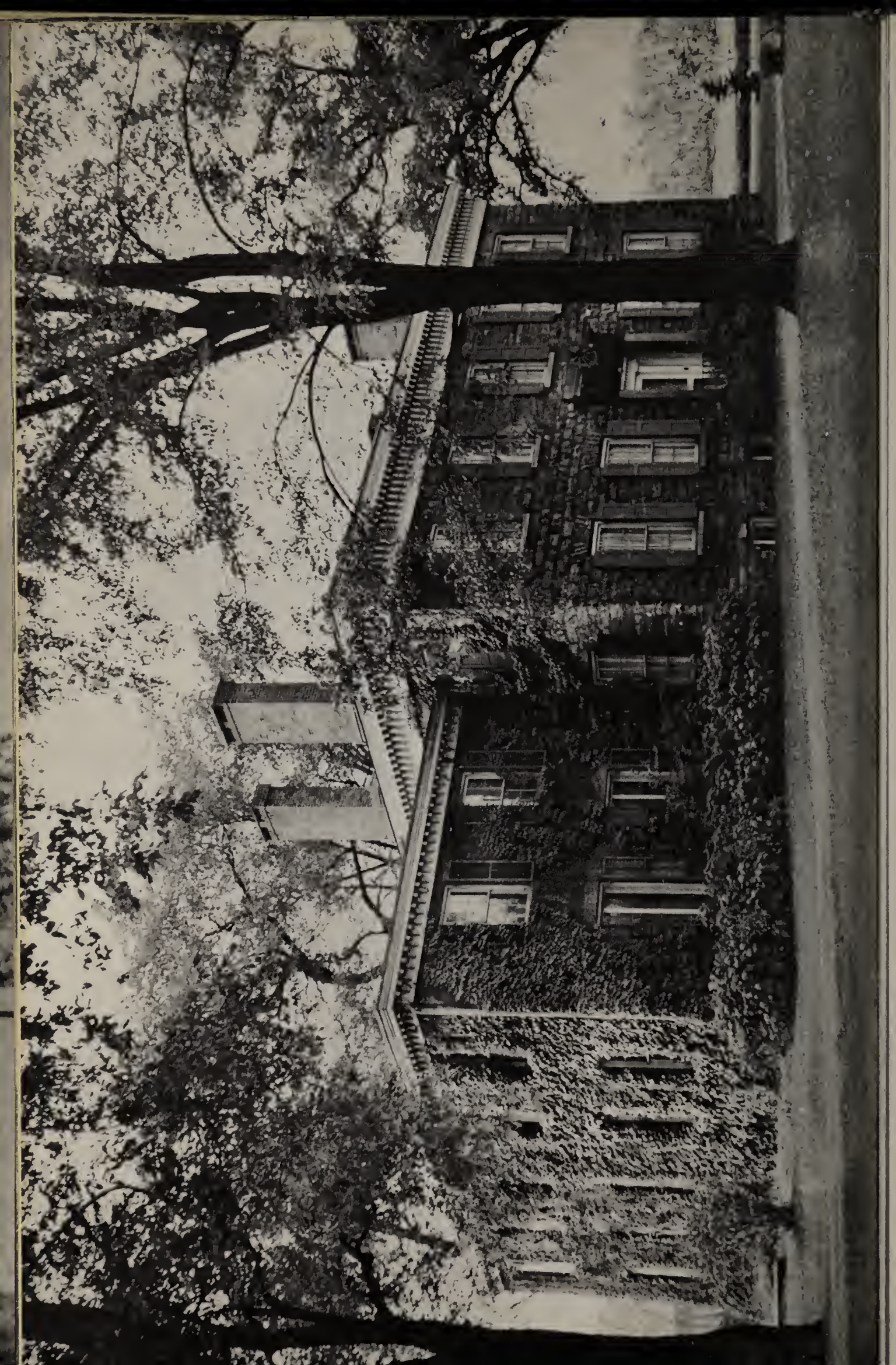
served as a bell and was first used to announce the sessions of court. The building, through the years, has been maintained in an excellent state of repair. It is the only Colonial courthouse in New York State and because of its connection with Sir William Johnson and with the many stirring events which run through the history of old Tryon County, the edifice is among the most highly prized of all New York's historical shrines.

The building still serves as courthouse, and is now the seat of government for Fulton County, formed from a part of the original Montgomery County in 1838. Montgomery County at one time (like Tryon County) comprised all that part of New York State lying west of a line running nearly through the center of the present Schoharie County.

Several blocks distant from the courthouse still stands the jail, also built in 1772, and still used as such. It is a sturdy stone building, but the addition of modern brick wings rob it of that indescribable character bestowed by age alone.







GUY PARK

AMSTERDAM

IF COLONEL GUY JOHNSON were to return today to live again in his old home, he would have little enough to complain about in the care bestowed upon it during the century and a half since that May morning in 1775, when, with his entire family, plus the servants and some 500 retainers, he fled to Canada.

Following the departure of the Guy Johnson family the estate was confiscated as enemy property and sold. It passed through several hands, during a part of which time it was used as a tavern. And a busy one it was, with its surrounding stalls and wagon sheds, crowded with teamsters and all manner of conveyances, for those were the days of the stagecoach and emigrant wagons bound for Western New York, the land of promise to thousands of settlers.

James Stuart bought the property in 1845 and with a nice sense of fitness and appreciation he repaired and restored the old building, adding in perfect harmony the two wings which seem to the casual visitor to constitute, with the central section, a unified whole. About 1905 the State of New York bought the property for canal purposes. The residence is maintained as an historic site, open to the public. The Amsterdam chapter of the D. A. R. use it as a headquarters.

While it is true the house remains — has even been added to — the grounds which once widely bounded it have been nibbled away until nothing more than a well-kept lawn separates its front door from the thundering passage of express trains and ten-ton trucks. At the back, on the bank of the Mohawk, where once Colonel Guy Johnson moored his fishing skiff to the wharf beside his summerhouse, is the Barge Canal. Great tows of barges led by a smoking tug, or perhaps a sleek black tanker, are gently raised or lowered to another river level by the turning of a few levers at the lock.

Guy Johnson was born in Warrenstown, Ireland, in 1740, the son of John, a brother of Sir William Johnson. When a lad

of 16 he came to America and seven years later had married his cousin Mary, or "Polly" as she was nicknamed, a daughter of Sir William Johnson and Catherine Weisenberg. Sir William gave them a tract of land a mile square and built in the center of it their first house which was of frame construction. This building was struck by lightning in 1773 and burned but was immediately replaced by the present stone structure, after plans by Samuel Fuller of Schenectady.

Originally it had a four-square roof, similar to the original roof of Queen Anne's Parsonage, and was in many respects like Fort Johnson in its interior arrangements. This was altered when the wings were added. There remains the wide central hall at the side of which a simple but effective staircase leads to another spacious hall above. The rooms were mostly paneled and richly draped. There were beautiful carpets, silver, and massive mahogany furniture in Guy Johnson's day. It was the social center of this section of the Valley for ten years before the war.

Adjoining Colonel Guy's property lay that of another son-in-law of Sir William, Colonel Daniel Claus, who married Anne, sometimes called Nancy, the full sister of "Polly" Johnson. Neither stick nor stone of their house remains. Sir William gave them likewise a tract of land a mile square which completely filled the gap between Guy Park and Fort Johnson. The Claus home stood near the junction of Guy Park Avenue with the highway, at the western City limits. It burned during the Revolution. The Claus family, like all the Johnson connections, fled to Canada, and their estate was confiscated and sold to a James Caldwell in 1786. Col. Claus fought through the war with headquarters a good part of the time at Montreal, Canada, the adopted home of many Valley Tories. The Colonel died in November, 1787, at King's Castle, Cardiff, South Wales, and was buried in the Cardiff Churchyard. His wife, Nancy, followed him in death in 1798. Her last resting place is in the old cemetery on the Butler farm adjacent to Niagara-on-the-Lake, where lies old Colonel John Butler (for years her father's trusted emissary) and many of the Colonel's family connections.

At Sir William's death in 1774, Colonel Guy succeeded him as Superintendent of Indian Affairs and Guy Park became the

scene of innumerable Indian pow-wows as had been the case at Fort Johnson and Johnson Hall during the days of Sir William. But not for long. Public sentiment ran counter to the Johnson viewpoint and Colonel Guy was forced to leave. Uncertain as to his future and unable to carry away his belongings, he left valuable papers and jewelry in a hidden closet in a bedroom on the second floor. These he never recovered during the war. But afterward, during the time the house was in use as a tavern, several unsuccessful attempts were made by a female agent sent by the Colonel to remove the treasure. Each time the room was occupied and when the agent tried in the night to enter the room its occupant would be awakened and arouse the landlord with the story of the "ghost" he had seen and describe it as the ghost of "Polly" Johnson. One day there came a stranger to the tavern and requested to be allowed to sleep in that room, saying he would put an end to the ghost if it appeared to him. His request was granted. During the night the household was awakened with a pistol shot. When the landlord reached the room he found the man dressed and about to leave, not willing to wait until daybreak. As he left he told the landlord he felt sure the ghost would never appear again and it never did, for beyond a doubt the stranger took with him whatever it was that attracted "ghosts."

Enroute to Canada, Colonel Johnson's first stopping place was Fort Stanwix, where he held a conference with his Indian allies. In his company were Colonel John Butler; the Colonel's son, Walter; Joseph Brant (whom Colonel Guy had named as his Secretary), and most of the Mohawk Indians. Following the council they continued on to Fort Ontario at Oswego, which was an abandoned post at the time. Here they received stores and supplies for the remainder of their journey but were forced to remain as the Colonel's wife "Polly" became ill. Adequate care was not in reach and she died. Colonel Guy continued his tragic journey to Montreal while the Butlers went to Niagara with the remainder of the force.

The following year Colonel Guy left for England but was back in New York in 1777, where for a time he had an interest and a part in the management of the Royal Theatre on John Street. He even acted in one of Coleman's plays. The War

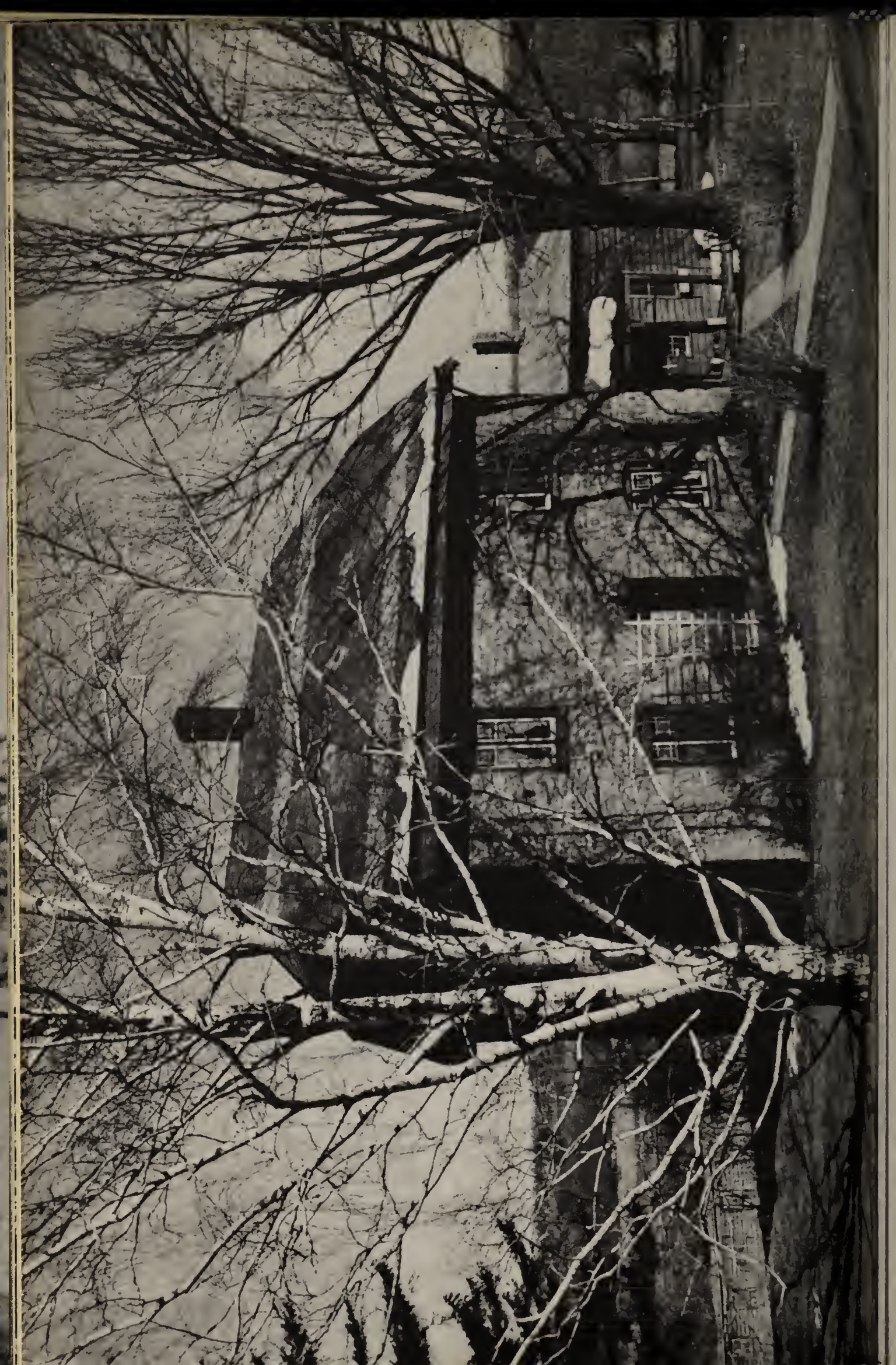
took him to Fort Niagara and in 1780 he was living there. He is described by one of the prisoners at the fort as "a short pussy man about 40 years of age of stern countenance and haughty demeanor dressed in a British uniform with powdered locks and a cocked hat. His voice was harsh and his tongue bore evidence of his Irish extraction."

In 1783, being replaced by Sir John as Inspector General of Indian Affairs, he returned to England and in London urged his claims in lieu of his lost estates along the Mohawk. But his wife (Sir William's daughter) was dead, as was Sir William, and Sir John was abundantly occupied in taking care of his own troubles. Thus Colonel Guy's pleadings, lacking the necessary "backing," were in vain. He died in poverty in Haymarket on March 5th, 1788.





Queen Anne's Indian Chapel, Built in 1713



QUEEN ANNE'S CHAPEL PARSONAGE

FORT HUNTER

FOR a considerable period of time prior to its fulfillment, the Mohawk Indians had been making urgent requests through their friend and representative, William Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Crown, that further fortifications be built in their country as a protection against the French and their allied Indians.

Possibly Peter Schuyler of Albany did more than any other white man to secure the building of the first of these posts at Fort Hunter. He appeared in London in 1710 with five of the chief sachems of the Indians. The Queen became interested in them and directed that each of them should sit individually for his portrait. This created at once a tremendous interest in Court circles and focused the attention of all London on the affairs of the Colony.

As a result a Fort was built at the mouth of the Schoharie Creek. Another, farther up the Mohawk, was considered but never begun. The contract for the building of the Fort on the Schoharie was signed October 11th, 1711, by Governor Hunter, and the Fort named in his honor. The contract ran as follows:

"Ye said Garet Symonce, Barent Vrooman, Hendrick Vrooman, John Wemp and Arent Van Petten shall and will forthwith repare into the Moehoques country and there build a Fort one hundred and fifty foot square the curtains made with Loggs of a foot square laid one upon another and pined together till they reach a height of twelve foot; at each corner a block-house twenty four foot square. Two storyes high, duple loopholes the rofe to be covered with boards and then shingled, the undermost part or ground room to be nine foot high the upper eight foot, both well floured with boards, the logs of ye block house to be nine inches square and bedsteads and benches in each blockhouse for twenty men and in each blockhouse a chemney towards ye inside of ye said fort with scaffolds five foot wide along each curtain from one blockhouse to another and also a chaple in middle

of the fort of twenty four foot square one storey ten foot high with a garret over it well covered with boards shingled and well flowrd; a seller of fifteen foot square under it covered with loggs and then with earth. The whole chapele to be well floured."

Hendrick Vrooman of Schenectady was the architect and boss carpenter. He had been a prisoner in Canada and while there learned the trade under the eye of a distinguished French architect. The contract price was £1,000. The ruins of this old wooden fort were torn down at the opening of the Revolution, at which time the chapel was palisaded and served as the Fort.

The Chapel was named for Queen Anne, who furnished the communion set, altar cloth and other needful articles. It was built as per the contract at the same time as the Fort, occupying a central position within the palisades. It was of limestone, 24 x 24 feet, and remained standing until its site fell within the route of the first of the Erie canals. Contractors tore it down in 1826 and the stone from its walls went into the construction of the canal locks.

In this bygone chapel of quaint arrangements and appointments a colored man served as chief usher and caretaker and during the days of worship wore a livery consisting in principal part of a gorgeous scarlet coat. He also manned the organ bellows. The organ was said to have been a very fine instrument, famed for its beautiful tone. It was later removed to the Episcopal Church at Johnstown, where it was destroyed when the building burned. This organ was said to have been a source of never-ending wonderment to the Indians.

One of the early ministers in the district was the Reverend Thomas Barclay of Fort Orange (Albany) whose zeal carried him out into the Indian country beyond Schenectady, where in the absence of a full time minister he conducted occasional services for a period of years. But the task at Fort Hunter required someone's entire attention.

In 1734 the manse was built and occupied by the Reverend William Andrews, who was assigned to the parish. Trinity Church in New York had supervision over the affairs of the little

chapel, and strangely enough several of the ministers who occupied this pulpit later became rectors of Trinity.

The manse is very substantially constructed of stone, about 25 x 35 feet, and two stories high. A small frame addition has been placed at the east end in recent years. The thickness of the walls, the window arrangement, with their small 6 x 8 inch panes of glass, the loop-holes and the cellar arches are all of great interest as examples of early architecture. In the basement, on an arch at the east end of the building, the numerals 1-7-1-2 are still visible. During the Revolution the building was barricaded, garrisoned and served as a fort.

Following the war the Mohawks, deprived of their former hunting grounds, took up their residence in Canada. Some of them settled around Brantford in 1788. Largely through the efforts of Joseph Brant, the Mohawk Chief, a grant of land was given them on March 20th, 1795, which lay twelve miles wide along the course of the Grand River, from its source to its mouth at Lake Erie. It is here at Brantford that Joseph Brant lies buried. Another group settled on the Bay of Quinte, and strangely enough both settlements were served by one of their old ministers, the Reverend John Stuart, D.D., who had preached to them at Fort Hunter. The "Little Gentleman," as the Indians called Reverend Stuart, was a man well over six feet in height and of great strength.

When the war broke out, the Indians took the Communion Service from the chapel and buried it. They later recovered it and took it to Canada, where it was divided between their two settlements. It is to be hoped the Mohawks found some comfort in these pieces for they were all they had of their former possessions.

The old manse, all that remains of this early outpost, is the oldest building in the Valley west of the Mabie house at Rotterdam Junction. The thorough overhauling that was given it in 1888 has destroyed much of its originality. The roof was covered with slate; a door cut through the opposite (south) wall to face the re-located roadway, and the old chimney, originally

built of Holland brick, was taken down and reconstructed. Some of these old bricks were given to St. Anne's Church in Amsterdam.

Having survived the vicissitudes of more than two centuries, during which time it was unfortunate enough to have undergone "modernization," it seems in a fair way to stand indefinitely against the elements. But against the hand of man—who knows?



QUEEN ANNE MOHAWK COMMUNION PLATE.

AT BRANTFORD, ONT.

1712.



IROQUOIS LONG-HOUSE



MARTYR'S RAVINE

AURIESVILLE

LIKE a boom town of the West, here today and gone tomorrow, Auriesville is another ghost town or remnant of what was once a populous and busy Dutch village tucked away in its narrow little valley.

An old Indian lived here, one of the last of his race, in his cabin on the bank of the little stream where it leaves the hills in its last lap across the flats to the Mohawk. The Mohawks had been gone for many years when "Old Aurie," as the Dutch called him, was called to the Happy Hunting Grounds. But the creek which murmured at his cabin door was so reminiscent of him that it came to be known as Auries Creek, and as their settlement grew the Dutch named it "Auriesville."

Elijah Pie was another Indian inhabitant here whom only the Grim Reaper could remove. He had been a Chief of the Stockbridge tribe of Indians, but as a Chief, he was too peacefully inclined to suit his warriors, so he left his New England home and came to the Mohawk Valley, where his mother was born and brought up and where she was buried. "Me want to be near mother's grave," he said.

In 1825 he built a hut on land owned by Abram V. Putman about a mile southeast of Auriesville and here he lived some fourteen years, happy and contented in his solitary existence. Yet to an Indian, himself a creature of the forest, he must have had rich companionships of which we could never know. The squirrels that played about his cabin, the red-winged blackbirds that chattered in the marsh close by, the speckled trout that flashed in the swift waters of the creek, were all his companions. There could be no lonesomeness for him in the midst of this abundant life.

He earned a living making brooms, baskets and other simple articles and was known as an honest and respectable character. In his old age, weakened and crippled with rheumatism, he was taken to the County Home, where his prophecy, laconically expressed, "Me soon die," came quickly true.

The newly constructed Erie Canal made of Auriesville quite a settlement, but another twenty-five years or so saw a railroad completed on the north shore of the Mohawk and Auriesville soon dwindled to a few scattered houses clinging to a century-old Dutch church. And so it appears today, while on the brow of the hill to the east overlooking in either direction long reaches of the Valley, is the Auriesville Shrine, the site of the palisaded Castle of the Mohawks, "Osseruenon."

Within the palisades of Osseruenon were some thirty low cabins, framed with saplings bent to form a framework, and covered with bark. Their cabins were 25 to 30 feet long, with an aisle or corridor down the center and along the sides, compartments for living and sleeping. The cooking was done in the wide center aisle. The population of the village was normally about 600. This was the home of the Turtle Clan, a division of the Mohawk tribe, the most powerful among the Federation known as the Six Nations of the Iroquois.

It was to this Castle, in 1642, that Father Jogues was brought as a prisoner, together with Rene Goupil and some Huron Indians who, as guides, were conducting the Father on a missionary expedition to the Mohawks. But the Hurons and the French were enemies of the Mohawks and the little party was taken captive. Few, if any, other than Father Jogues himself, survived, and he only through the faithful and whole-hearted assistance of Arent Van Curler of Rensselaerwyck (Albany) which was then the nearest white man's settlement. The story remains to us, in letters written by Father Jogues, parts of which are quoted:

"When we came down from the Hurons in July 1642, we asked Rev. Father Vimoul to let us take him (Goupil) with us . . . I cannot express the joy which this good young man felt when the Superior told him that he might make ready for the journey . . . On the 2nd, we encountered the enemies . . . Nearly all the Hurons had fled into the woods and . . . we were seized . . . While the enemies pursued the fugitives I heard his (Goupil's) confession and gave him absolution not knowing what might befall us after our capture. The enemies having returned from their hunt, fell upon us like mad dogs,

with sharp teeth tearing out our nails, and crushing our fingers which he endured with much patience and courage . . . We still had this consolation during the journey that we made in going to the enemy's country, that we were together! On this journey I was witness to his many virtues . . .

Covered with wounds as he was, he dressed those of other persons — the enemies who had received some blow in the fight as well as the prisoners themselves.

On the lake we met 200 Iroquois, who came to Richelieu while the French were beginning to build the Fort: these loaded us with blows and made us experience the rage of those who were possessed by a demon.

On approaching the first village where we were treated so cruelly, he showed the most uncommon patience and gentleness. Having fallen under the shower of blows from clubs and iron rods . . . as it were half dead . . . he was in so pitiful a condition that he would have inspired compassion in cruelty itself . . . and in his face one distinguished nothing but the whites of his eyes.

Hardly had he taken a little breath, as well as we, when they came to give him three blows on his shoulders with a heavy club, as they had done to us before. When they had cut off my thumb — as I was the most conscious — they turned to him and cut his right thumb at the first joint.

During the six days in which we were exposed to all those who wished to do us some harm, he showed an admirable gentleness; he had his whole breast burned by the coals and hot cinders which the young lads threw upon our bodies at night when we were bound flat on the earth.

After we had been in the country six weeks, . . . I had some presentment of what was to happen and said to him, 'My dearest brother, let us commend ourselves to our Lord and to our good mother the blessed Virgin; these people have some evil design as I think' . . . We accordingly return toward the Village to see what they might say to us; one of those two Iroquois draws a hat-

chet, which he held concealed under his blanket and deals a blow with it on the head of Rene, who was before him. He falls motionless, his face to the ground, pronouncing the holy name of Jesus. . . . At the blow, I turn round and see a hatchet all bloody; I kneel down to receive the blow which was to unite me with my dear companion; but as they hesitate I rise again, and run to the dying man who was quite near. They dealt him two other blows with the hatchet on the head and despatched him, but not until I had first given him absolution. . . .

It was the (29th) of September . . . when this angel in innocence . . . gave his life. . . . They ordered me to return to my cabin where I awaited the rest of the day and the next, the same treatment. . . . The next morning I nevertheless went out to enquire where they had thrown that blessed body, for I wished to bury it at whatever cost. . . . I go and seek, and with the aid of an Algonquin . . . I find him. The children, after he had been killed, had stripped him and had dragged him, with a rope about his neck, into a torrent which passes at the foot of their Village. . . . I took the body . . . put it beneath the water weighted with large stones, to the end that it might not be seen. It was my intention to come the next day . . . to make a grave and place the body therein. . . . It rained all night so that the torrent swelled uncommonly. . . . When I draw near the place I no longer find that Blessed deposit. I go into the water, which was already very cold; I go and come — I sound with my foot . . . I find nothing . . . The young men had taken away the body, and dragged it into a little wood nearby, — where during the autumn and winter, the dogs, ravens and foxes fed upon it. In the spring, when they told me that it was there . . . I went several times without finding anything. At last the 4th time, I found the head and some half gnawed bones which I buried with the design of carrying them away, if I should be taken back to 3 Rivers as they spoke of doing. I kissed them very devoutly several times, as the bones of a martyr of Jesus Christ. . . .”

This ravine is on the west side of the hill, and down its course are appropriate markers and statuary in memory of Rene Goupil, the martyr.

After a long period of servitude as slave to a squaw, Father Jogues finally managed his escape aided by Van Curler and Do. Megapolensis in August following the year of his capture. He went to France, where much was made of him. But feeling his work was not finished, he returned in 1646, and went again to the castle of the Mohawks. The following is an account of his journey and its fatal ending:

"On the road from Montreal to the Indian castle, about two days march from the castle of Osseruenon, a band of Indians fell upon Jogues and his party, stripped them, insulted them and led them captive back to the town where Jogues had already spent so many long months of suffering and slavery.

They reached Osseruenon on October 17, 1646 and immediately they arrived were treated to fresh insults of every possible nature. Blows were rained upon them — savages sliced pieces of flesh from Jogues' back and arms and ate them before his eyes . . . Jogues replies, 'Why do you put me to death? I have come to your country to cement peace, make the earth solid, and teach you the way to Heaven and you treat me like a wild beast.'

A division of opinion arose among the savages as to Jogues' fate. One of the factions composed of the Wolf and Tortoise clans were for saving him but the Bear family insisted upon the death penalty. A council was called and fearing Jogues would be spared as a result of the confab, the Bears conspired to bring about his immediate death.

On the evening of Oct. 18th, 1646, Jogues was invited to the cabins of the Bear clan to partake of some food. Although Jogues had misgivings, he humbly followed where they led, prepared for a treacherous blow for he perceived their sullen attitude as they walked before and behind him.

As he was entering the cabin an Indian struck him with a tomahawk which split his skull and caused him to fall dead in his tracks."

Another name intimately associated with Auriesville is that of Kateri Tekakwitha, the "Lily of the Mohawks," whose life is briefly summarized as another light on the dimly lit picture of "Osseruenon."

Her first name, pronounced "Kat-e-ree," is the Indian for "Katherine," and the last name, "Tek-a-quee-ta," as it is pronounced, is given as meaning "One who approached moving something before her." When four years old she narrowly escaped death from smallpox. Thereafter, her eyes having been weakened by the disease, she found it necessary to grope her way by "pushing something before her."

The time and place of her birth is not definitely known but it is accepted as being within a mile's radius of Auriesville in 1656 — ten years following the death of Father Jogues. Her father was a Mohawk Indian and her mother a captive Christian Algonquin, brought up and baptized by the French in Canada. She had been captured there by a raiding party of Mohawk Indians and brought to the Valley. To save her life, a Mohawk brave married her.

To this marriage there were two children, a son who died of a devastating smallpox plague that swept through the Indian nation. The other child was Kateri. Both of Kateri's parents were also victims of plague. The mother died with a prayer on her lips that her daughter might early be brought into Christianity.

As an orphan, Kateri was adopted by her aunt and uncle and taken to live with them, and by them raised in the greatest seclusion. Being naturally of a solitary nature, her friends first thought her unsociable but soon came to know that it was her modesty and shyness. The descriptions of her as given by the "Blackrobes," or Priests, are of a maiden, sweet, patient, chaste, innocent and industrious.

When the French DeTracy marched up the Mohawk Valley in October of 1666 to destroy the Mohawk Castles, news of his coming preceded him and Kateri and her family, who were living at Auriesville, together with the other inhabitants, fled to

Andagaron Castle, where after a consultation it was decided to abandon this Castle as well. So the combined forces retreated further up the river to Tionnontogen, the Castle of the Wolves, hidden behind the "Nose," a sharp mountain spur that projects itself into the Valley at Yosts. Here they had abundant stores of food and water and made further and elaborate plans for its defense. However, fire from the carefully placed cannon which the French had laboriously brought over lakes and rivers and through miles of wilderness was more than the Indians had reckoned on and they again fled, hiding the women and children in scattered spots through the forest. DeTracy burned the place, as he had the other two lower Castles and turned back down the Valley.

Following DeTracy's retreat Kateri's adopted family again took up their residence at Auriesville through the coming winter, undergoing the most severe hardship and privation, due to the complete loss of their food stores and houses. When spring came the tribe moved to a newly built Castle at Caughnawaga (Fonda) where Kateri lived until her flight to Canada. Here is the spring to which she came with her jugs and which is named in her memory.

Her devoutness brought her to the attention of the Fathers and she was finally baptized by Father DeLamberville in 1675. She had earnestly wished for this for many years but her uncle and aunt were not in sympathy. Kateri's baptism caused a deep rift between her and her family; also the younger members of the tribe stoned her and ridiculed her in many ways. This bitter animosity caused her the greatest unhappiness and she longed to escape to Canada. Her opportunity finally came in 1677. Her life in Canada was lived in the "new" Caughnawaga beside the St. Lawrence rapids near Montreal.

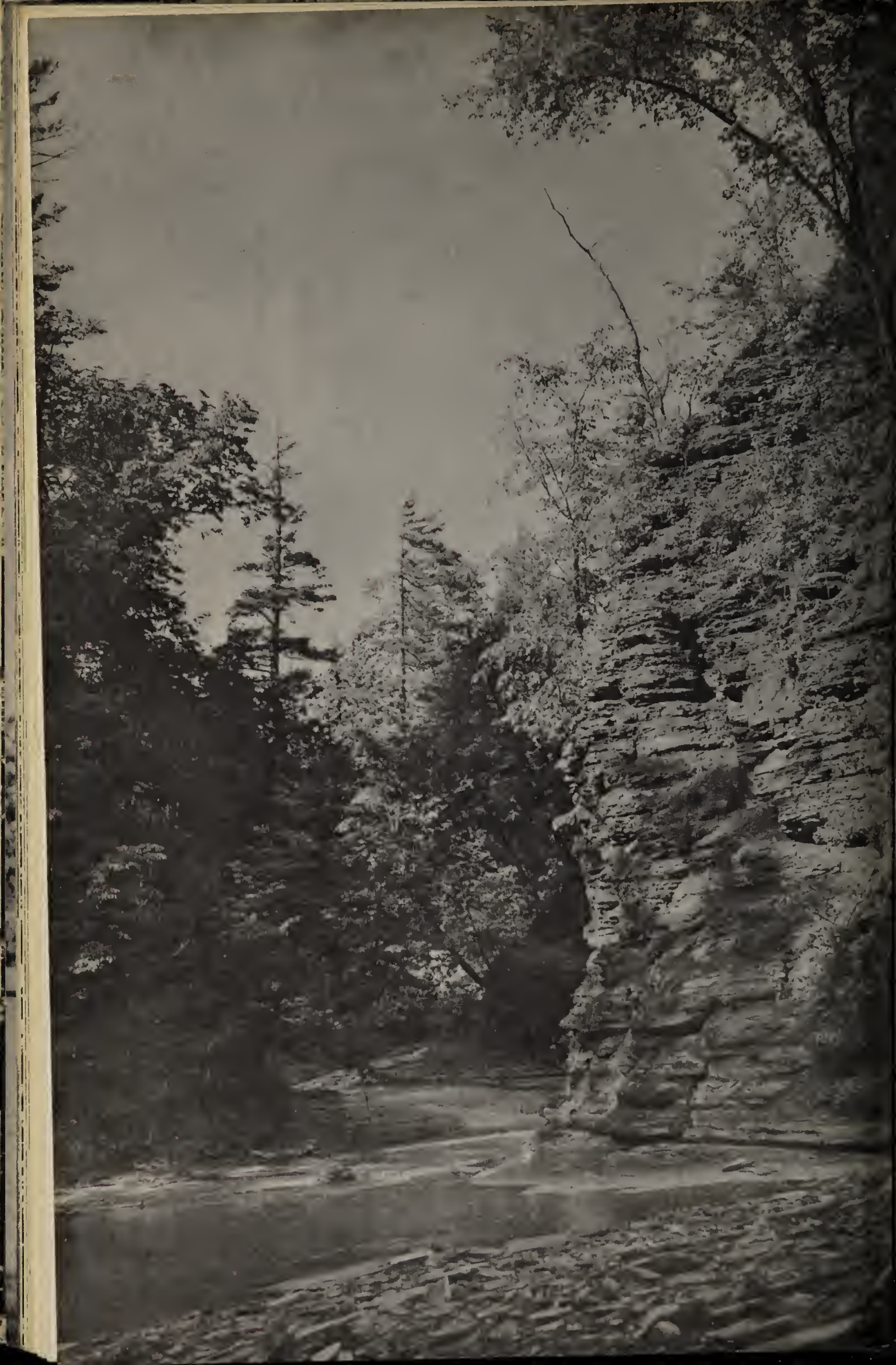
In March, 1679, she was allowed to take the vows. Following this she devoted herself more ardently to her prayers. She also subjected herself to self-inflicted punishment, even torture, in a spirit of penance and atonement for imagined sins. There is no question but that devotion to her prayers and an utter disregard of her physical well-being caused by these punishments brought about her breakdown. One of the most serious and later tortures she chose to undergo was a night spent upon a bed

of thorns which she, herself, had gathered in the forest and made into a mat upon the floor of her lodging. She was found in the morning, following this terrible night, in a dangerous and weakened condition. Her last illness was brief. She died in the presence of her few intimates in Caughnawaga on April 17th, 1680, at the early age of twenty-four. Part of her remains are kept in deepest reverence at the "new Caughnawaga."

There are portraits of her at St. Mary's in Albany and with the Jesuits in Troy as well as several others at the New Caughnawaga church. At the Auriesville Shrine her statue stands beside that of Father Jogues.







THE DADANASCARA

FONDA

THIS name, given their home by the Visscher family, was borrowed from the little stream that ripples along the foot of the slope east of the house. The word is, of course, Indian in origin and signifies "trees bearing fungus" or "mushroom growth," but the connection between the meaning of the word and any characteristic of the creek is no longer evident. The location of the home is about three miles east of Fonda on the north side of the Mohawk and at some little distance from the channel, being on the slope of the hill just above the river flats.

The Visschers were Hollanders, coming to Albany in 1649, and there Harmon Visscher was born on August 24th, 1701. In 1739 he married Catherine, a daughter of William Brouwer of Schenectady. In 1750 he secured a patent for 1000 acres of land, of which this homestead is a part, paying for the tract £800. Here he lived for twenty-two years, dying just prior to the outbreak of the Revolution. His grave, shaded by beautiful old maples, is in the family cemetery at the crest of the hill behind the house. Four sons and three daughters survived him, the eldest being Frederick, born in Albany on February 22nd, 1741. His name, with that of his brothers, John and Harmon, occurs repeatedly throughout the story of the war.

Just prior to the opening of hostilities a meeting was held at Tribes Hill which was attended by some 300 men of the neighborhood. Colonel John Butler, then a justice under the English Crown, made a speech using every influence and argument to persuade his audience to remain loyal to England, and after his closing remarks formed them into lines and called upon all to step forward who upheld England's cause. At this time there was but one man who stood firm and he was Frederick Visscher. However, as time passed, and events shaped themselves, a majority of the others changed their attitude.

Frederick soon received a Colonel's commission from Congress. John and Harmon were both in his regiment, the former being promoted to the rank of Colonel at a later date.

A few excerpts from the minutes of the Committee of Safety at Schenectady are interesting. The first are of the meeting held July 17th, 1774:

“Frederick Fisher applied to this board for some ball for the use of the inhabitants of Tryon County. Having taken said request into Consideration — Resolved, to furnish him with two hundredweight of ball at the rate of forty shillings per hundred.”

At the meeting of December 18th, 1775:

“a motion made,
Resolved that Hugh Mitchell is appointed to receive a payment of four pounds due to this board by Frederick Fisher and the Committee of Caughnawaga for Balls sould them and pay the same to Margaret Van Antwerp, from whom the ball was received.”

These “Balls” were discovered hidden in the cellar of the Van Antwerp-Mebie House at Rotterdam and ordered seized, but to be paid for at the current value. Another payment was made on this account as shown by the minutes of the meeting held May 25th, 1776:

“Resolved, that Harmanus Wendle is appointed to receive four pounds from Frederick Visger for ball sold him last summer, and to pay the same to the aforesaid Margaret Van Antwerp.”

Colonel Visscher's men composed the Mohawk Regiment acting as the rear guard in charge of the baggage train when it was ambushed at Oriskany, en route to the aid of besieged Fort Stanwix (Schuyler). They suffered severe losses but the Colonel escaped with his life and the baggage train was saved.

On May 22nd, 1780, the Visscher mansion was attacked by Tories and Indians. Within were the Colonel, his mother, sisters, two brothers and the servants. The sisters fled, hiding themselves in the creek bed. The mother was too feeble to make her escape and was struck down. The three brothers, though fighting as best they could, were soon overpowered. John and Harmon were murdered and all were scalped, the Colonel being left for dead. Fortunately he recovered in time to escape the

flames (for the house had been set afire) and to carry the remains of his brothers outside. His mother, stunned by a severe blow on the head, collapsed in a chair, and so she was when he found her and carried her, chair and all, to safety beyond the burning building. This chair, showing plainly the marks of the fire which so nearly consumed it, remains here in the possession of the descendants. Jacob Sammons, who was taken captive during this same raid, left a written account in which he states he saw the Indians cure and comb out the scalps of Colonel Visscher and his brothers, painting the fleshy side red. The Indians were paid as high as \$20.00 by the English for each enemy scalp! Sammons was taken to Canada and held for a considerable time but finally escaped and returned in safety.

Tom, a black slave belonging to Adam Zielie, a neighbor, was the first to arrive at the Visscher home following the attack. He found the Colonel and inquired what he should do. Colonel Visscher could not speak but motioned for water, which Tom quickly got from the creek, bringing it in his old hat. Thus revived, the Colonel was soon able to talk and was taken across the river to the home of Ephriam Wemple, where every care was given him. But the case was beyond simple remedies, for the flesh on his face sagged to such an extent as to make him almost unrecognizable, due of course to the loss of his scalp.

Seeing the necessity of proper care, the Colonel was sent down the Mohawk to Schenectady "in a canoe where he arrived at dark of the same day as his misfortune." There he received medical attention from Doctors Meade of Schenectady, and Stringer of Albany as well as two Army surgeons. His case was for a time critical and though he gradually improved, complete recovery was delayed for some unaccounted reason. Later this became obvious. A wound, inflicted by the scalping knife in the back of his neck, had escaped the attention of his attendants. The flies getting into it had deposited their larvae; thus it became a deep-seated and offensive sore. This being properly dressed, the patient recovered rapidly. Colonel Visscher was the only male survivor of his line and bore to the last this broad scar upon his head, which, on public occasions, was covered with a silver plate made for the purpose.

Colonel Frederick married Gazena De Graff of Schenectady

on May 22nd, 1768. He died June 9, 1809, his widow surviving him six years. The funeral was from the mansion he had rebuilt. He left four sons and two daughters. Frederick Harmon Visscher, one of the sons, became the owner of the mansion, married Deborah Conyne and had one child, Gazena Catherine.

Deborah died when the child was but six months old and the father survived her but a year longer. The orphan, Gazena Catherine, later married Judge De Graff. The Judge died August 4th, 1868, and his son, the only survivor of the family, then inherited the home.

The 1790 census lists the following Visschers at Schenectady and Schoharie:

Hermanus Visscher —			
Schenectady	1 male;	2 females;	0 slaves
Susannah Visscher —			
Schenectady	0 male;	4 females;	7 slaves
Teunis Visscher —			
Schenectady	1 male;	1 female;	0 slaves
William Visscher —			
Schoharie	1 male;	1 female;	0 slaves

The same census lists the following De Graff families under the Schenectady heading. As this included the De Graff neighborhood at old Cranesville, just east of Amsterdam, some of these families were no doubt residents of that section:

Jesse De Graff	4 males;	2 females;	0 slaves
Abraham De Graff	5 males;	3 females;	3 slaves
William De Graff	1 male;	0 females;	4 slaves
Andreas De Graff	3 males;	4 females;	0 slaves
Claus De Graff	7 males;	5 females;	3 slaves

Dadanascara has been described as the home of Douw Mauverensen, the hero of Harold Frederic's esteemed novel, "In the Valley." The Stuart home, described in the book, was perhaps the first mansion, and all traces of it are gone. The old stone slave house, built into the side of the hill behind the site of the original Visscher house, still remains in excellent repair.

The present home, erected in 1791, has been enlarged and improved through the years by the family who still occupy the home and who are lineal descendants of the Harmon Visscher of 1701.

It is a satisfaction to know that out of respect and appreciation for his record as a Revolutionary officer, General Washington assigned Colonel Visscher the seat at his right when he and General Philip Schuyler were guests of the citizens of Schenectady at Robert Clench's tavern in 1782.






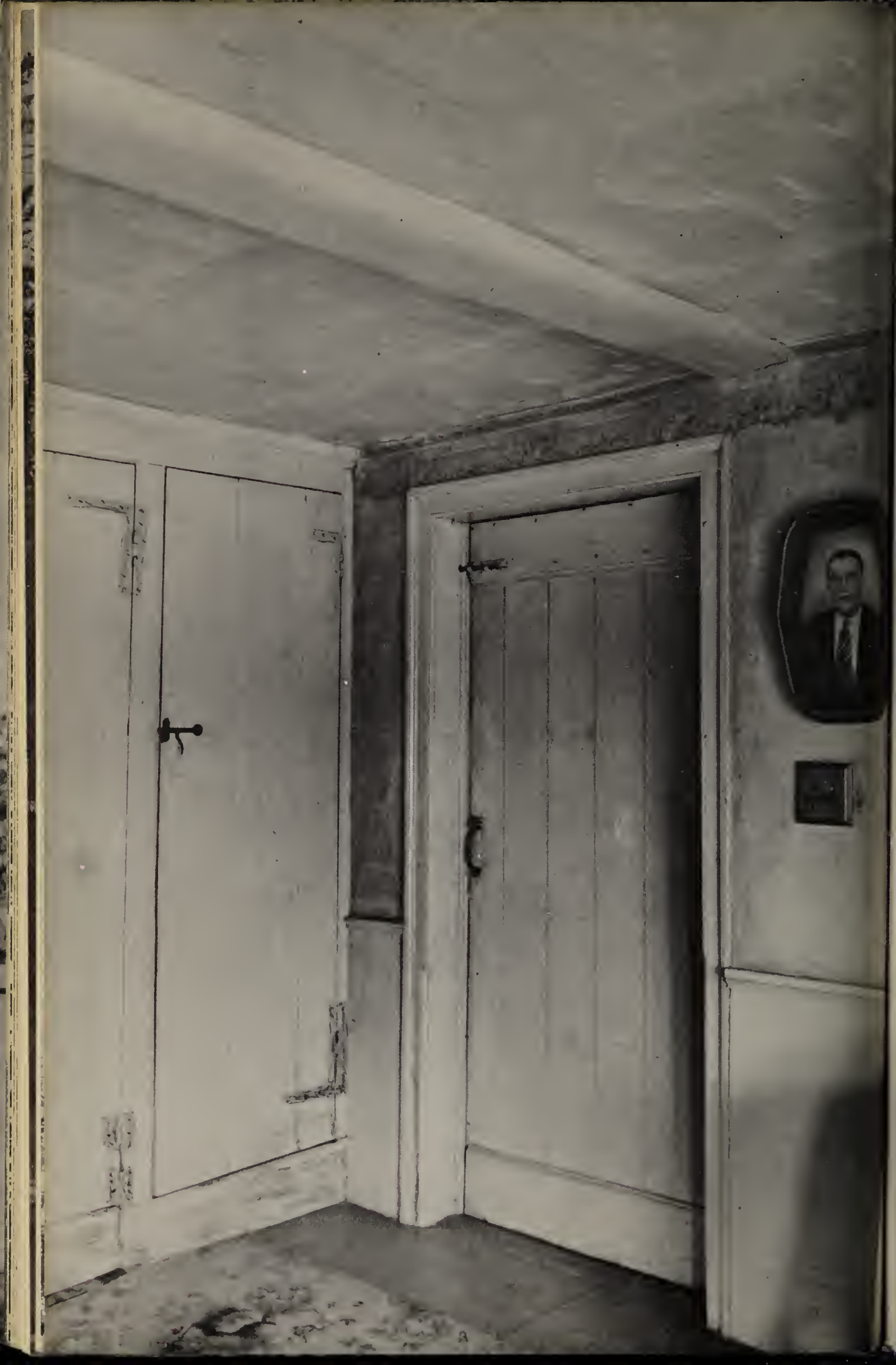
BUTLETSBURY

FONDA

"Ringed by the ancient forests of the North, I saw the gray weatherbeaten walls of the house. The lawns were overgrown; the great well-sweep shattered; the locust trees covered with grapevines — the cherry and apple-trees to the south broken and neglected. Weeds smothered the flower gardens, whilst here and there a dull red poppy peered at me through withering tangles; lilac and locust had already shed foliage too early blighted, but the huge and forbidding maples were all aflame in their blood-red autumn robes. . . .

The shutters had been ripped off their hinges; all within was bare and dark; dimly, I made out the shadowy walls of a hallway which divided the house into halves . . . The clapboards were a foot wide, evidently fashioned with care and beaded on the edges. The outside doors all opened outward; and I noted, with a shudder of contempt, the 'witch's half-moon' or lunette, in the bottom of each door, which betrays the cowardly superstition of the man who lived there. Such cat-holes are fashioned for haunted houses; the specter is believed to crawl out through these openings, and then to be kept out with a tarred rag stuffed into the hole — ghosts being unable to endure tar. Faugh! If specters walk, the accursed house must be alive with them — ghosts of the victims of old John Butler, wraiths dripping red from Cherry Valley — children with throats cut; women with bleeding heads and butchered bodies, stabbed through and through — and perhaps the awful specter of Lieutenant Boyd with eyes and nails plucked out, and tongue cut off, bound to the stake and slowly roasting to death, while Walter Butler watched the agony curiously, interested and surprised to see a disemboweled man live so long! . . . "

 HE quotation is from Robert W. Chambers' novel "The Reckoning," and the description of the house is quite accurate today, with the exception of a shingled exterior. The Tory Butlers fled the place with the prospects of



war coming closer and the estate was confiscated and sold. It has been continuously occupied but many of its shutters are even now closely drawn and an uncanny atmosphere seems to envelop it, due perhaps to the mystery which surrounds it and the Butler men who occupied it.

Old Walter Butler built this frame house on the crest of a steep hill just east of old Caughnawaga. From the house door one can see the Mohawk, winding out of a low range of hills on the western horizon. In its elevated position it equals that of a "look-out" post and from it on many occasions the Butlers and their Indian allies must have exchanged smoke signals with their comrades far up the Valley.

There is some question as to the ancestry of this Butler family and to their movements as well, both en route to America and as to their goings and comings after arrival. We read of a Walter Butler sailing from Barbadoes aboard the ketch *John and Sarah* on October 20th, 1679; destination, New York. The trail from New York to New London is obscure but we find a Walter Butler marrying Mary (born Nov. 4th, 1690) the only daughter of George Denison at New London in 1712. Her mother was Mary Wetherell, whose first husband had been Thomas Harris, a resident of the Barbadoes, who died there June 9th, 1691, leaving an estate estimated at £927. This probably explains the remark that Mary (the bride) "was regarded as the richest heiress in the settlement."

In 1727 we find Lieutenant Walter Butler marrying Deborah (Ely) Dennis and it was this Deborah who rejoined her husband (Old Walter) in the "Northern Counties above Albany" in 1742.

Just when Old Walter went into the Mohawk Valley is indefinite but there is a record of a Crown Grant of land in the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys to Walter Butler and forty-two others in 1733. In 1737 he was stationed at Fort Hunter, a very early settlement situated on the south bank of the Mohawk at the mouth of Schoharie Creek. This location is perhaps three miles from the site of Butlersbury, Old Walter's future home, north of the river.

In 1735 fourteen thousand acres of this land extending from Fort Hunter eastward along the south side of the river was sold to Sir Peter Warren, the uncle of Sir William Johnson, who was to become its overseer in 1738. Possibly Walter Butler realized some immediate cash from whatever interest he might have had in this tract for in the same year (1735) he (together with three others) obtained a Crown Grant for land on the north side of the river which included his homesite.

He finished his house probably in the fall of 1742, which date coincides with an entry penned in a New London diary as follows:

"November 6, 1742. Mrs. Butler, wife of Capt. Walter Butler, and her children and family is gone away by water to New York in order to go to him in the Northern Counties above Albany, where he has been several years, Captain of the Forts."

The house once built and the family gathered into it, Old Walter, now stationed at Fort Oswego, returned there to take up his duties. His two sons, John and Tom, seem to have been with him a great deal of the time. Tom was more trader than soldier, though in those days the merchant often enough shouldered his gun. As a family they were closely affiliated with Sir William Johnson as his agents in trade and as military aides and all seem to have shared his entire confidence. Old Walter died in this house in the winter of 1759-60.

Colonel John, born 1725, Old Walter's son, now grown up, was with Sir William at the capture of Niagara, which event just preceded his father's death. He had married Catherine Pollock about 1752 and Young Walter, his son, born early to the marriage, grew to be one of the most thoroughly detested Tories to carry the war into his own homeland. Walter's military service must have begun about 1768, for in that year his name is mentioned among others "recommended to be Captains and Subalterns for the new formed regiments of militia."

This was on the eve of the Revolution. In 1771 the Butlersbury estate consisted of some 5,000 acres and reached westward to include a part of old Caughnawaga. Indeed, the old Caughnawaga Church, spared during the Johnson raids, is said to have

owed its immunity to the fact that it stood on Butlersbury acres. The importance of the Butler estate is noted by the fact that taxes levied against it were second only to those assessed against Sir William's holdings.

In May, 1775, the Butler men fled to Canada with Colonel Guy Johnson, and Butlersbury knew them no more. Mrs. Butler was taken to Albany and there held prisoner. The house was deserted. Colonel John and Captain Walter were attached for the most part to the Niagara garrison. It is a matter of documentary evidence that these two men, father and son, were the most active, most important and the most effective foes of the Clinton-Sullivan expedition. Their slender force, hopelessly outnumbered, half starved and at a dangerously great distance from their base of supplies, could do but little to stem the irresistible advance of a well-planned campaign such as this. And the Indian country, its villages, homes and fields suffered a wholesale destruction which permanently crippled the entire Indian population. But it also added fuel to the fire of Indian hatred already at white heat. The Mohawk Valley was to feel the retaliatory effect of this expedition after the winter of suffering and privation had passed. However, so much of this story has to do with Niagara it is better told there.

So again the spotlight of interest is swung away from the old house as it had been so much of the time since Old Walter built it. One wonders what happiness the family did find in the home, for whenever mentioned the men folks were on the war-path or stationed at some fort or remote outpost where duty held them fast.

The loyalty of the entire family to the Johnsons, "dogs of the Johnson family," some called them, and to Old England, made heavy demands on each one of them. Of them all, only Old Walter came home to die. Even Colonel John's wife shared in the sufferings when she was taken captive to Albany as stated and held an uncommonly long time while Colonel John and Captain Walter tried desperately to arrange an exchange of prisoners that would liberate her. This they finally accomplished and she joined them at Niagara, where she died in 1793. Colonel John died there three years later. From Captain Walter the

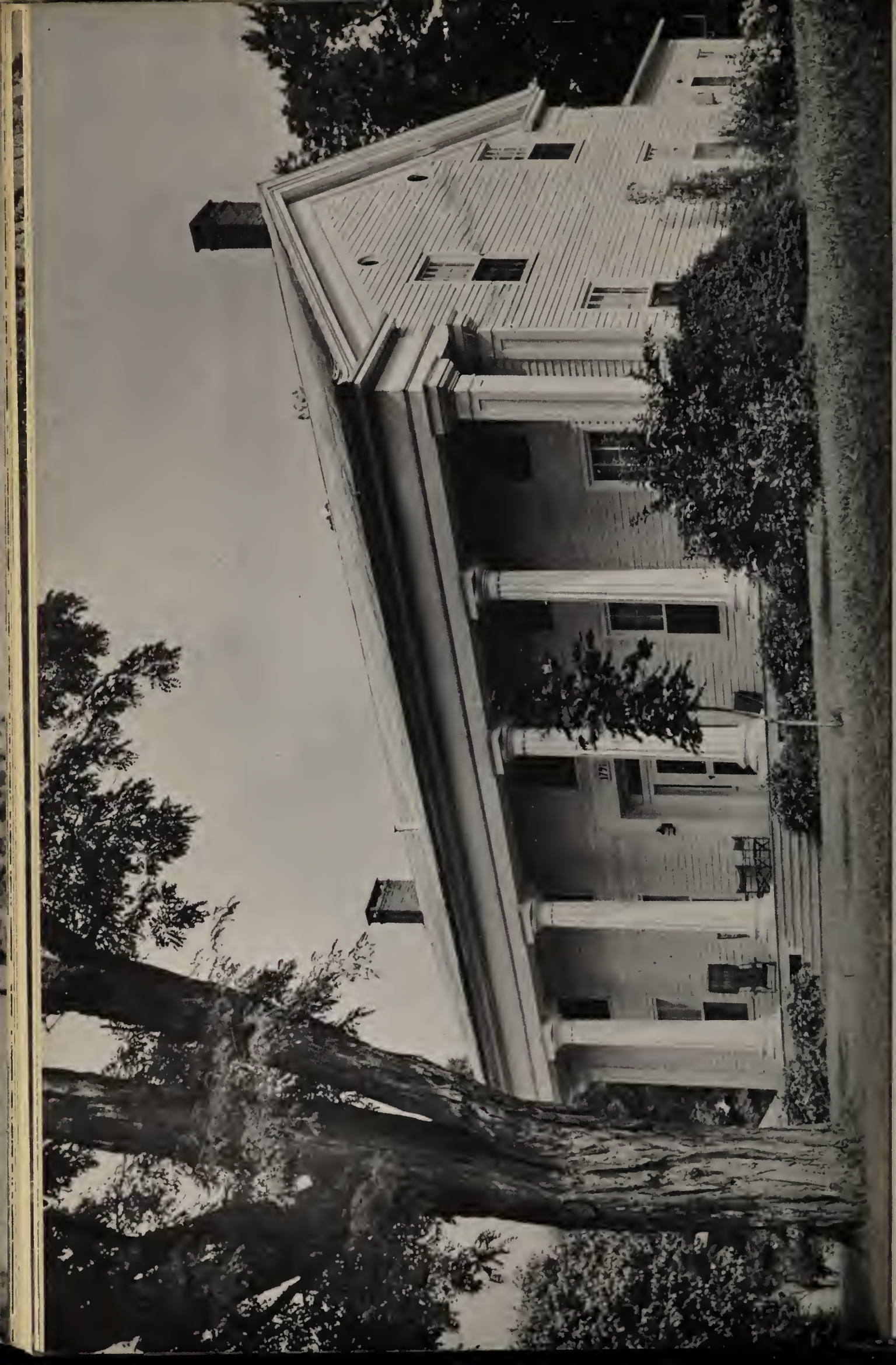
supreme sacrifice was exacted when he was shot on the battlefield of West Canada Creek near the present Hinkley, N. Y., and in their hurried retreat his body was abandoned by his comrades to the creatures of the forest.



NEW YORK STATE



Founded 1614
Chartered 1686



JELLES FONDA RESIDENCE

FONDA



THE old Dutch town of Caughnawaga stood on the flats toward the eastern end of the present Fonda, and was first settled by Douw Fonda whose house was erected just east of the highway bridge on the north bank of the river. The site is now marked by the State and is a part of the grounds of the Montgomery County Fair Association.

When this tract was graded for the race course, some very interesting relics were found, among them the graves of persons buried in the old cemetery. Several well curbs were also found and parts of the foundations of various homes, including that of Douw Fonda.

The original Fonda in the Colony was Jelles Douwse, a Hollander, who came here in 1642. His occupation seems to have been that of a whaler. He is mentioned at Beverwyck as early as 1654. He married a Hester (family name uncertain), and died about 1662. His son, Douw Jelles (1640-1700), owned land near Lansingburg (Troy). He married Rebecca Conyn in 1666. They had a son named Jelles Adam, born in 1670, and it was he who went to Schenectady, the first of this name in the Mohawk Valley. He was a gunsmith by trade and continued this work in Schenectady from 1700 to 1720. His wife was Rebecca Winne whom he married in 1694. He died on September 8th, 1737, having had eleven children, eight of whom survived him.

Douw, the son of Jelles Adam, was born August 22nd, 1700. He moved to Caughnawaga in 1751, where he conducted a flourishing trading business. He was buried in the Dutch Church Cemetery on the flat close by his home. His wife was Maritje Vrooman, a daughter of Adam Vrooman of Schenectady. Her tombstone and that of her husband (the inscriptions they bear being in Dutch) have both been removed to the new cemetery overlooking the Valley from the hill-top just behind the old townsite. Here also are the stones of the son Jelles and his wife, Jannetje Vrooman.

Jelles (Gillis or Giles) born in 1727 was one of three sons of Douw of Caughnawaga. He was an extensive landholder and a trader as his father had been, dealing largely with the Indians as well as contracting for the supplies for the forts along this part of the Mohawk and westward as far as Niagara. Many of his papers were in the possession of his great grandson, Major Giles H. F. Van Horne. His ledger is an interesting old book and unfortunately shows accounts due him in excess of \$10,000. The following is an entry charged to Sir William Johnson, but beyond doubt this one was paid:

"To burying Sacorias (Zachariah) a Mohawk Indian, 1 large blanket, 1 large shirt, 17 lbs. pork, 2 galings rum, 17 lbs. flower. The sachem spoke to me and said he was very poor and that it was useful at the funeral of a grown person to have provisions."

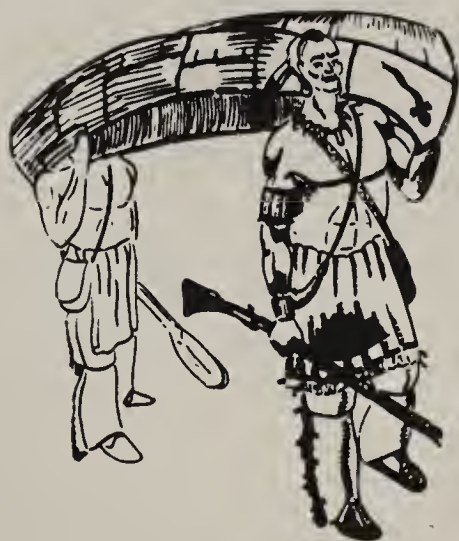
This early trade was carried on from the large stone store which stood near the residence. He was a Major of militia and served under Sir William Johnson against the French and Indians in the Battle of Lake George. Later, probably because of his being physically incapacitated by an injured leg, he became associated with the home guards.

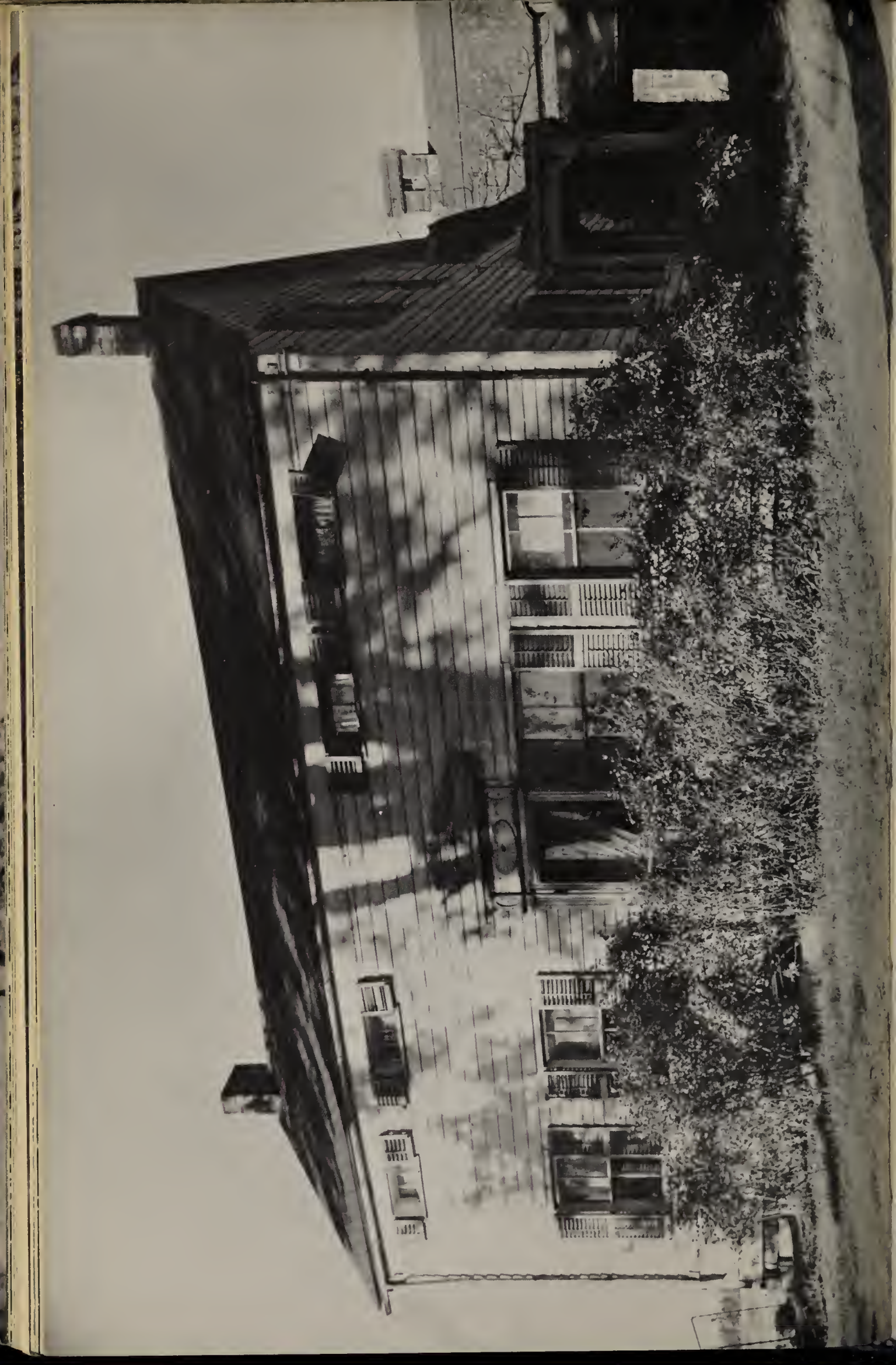
Jelles built a home and an "ashery" six miles west of Caughnawaga on the north side of the river along Canagara Creek. This site is now the location of the Montgomery County Home and its historical significance is explained by suitable markers. It was part of a great tract of 6,000 acres of land given by the Mohawks about 1716 to Captain Harmanus Van Slyke, whose grandmother was half French, half Mohawk. The deed of gift was confirmed to Captain Harmanus by King Charles I in 1723. The land runs along the Mohawk for six miles. The eastern half Van Slyke sold to Colonel DePeyster, treasurer of the Province of New York, who owned it at his death. The trustees of his estate sold it to Jelles Fonda in 1768. It included what is known as "The Nose," a conspicuous landmark near this spot. Major Fonda, soon after acquiring the property, began the erection of his mills and "ashery," wood ashes being the source of potash.

This complete set of buildings was destroyed in the first raid of Sir John Johnson, along with nearly every other building on

the north side of the river from "The Nose," just east of Canajoharie down to Tribes Hill. Fortunately Major Jelles was not at home at the time. His wife and their son Douw were warned of the coming of the raiders and escaped across the river. The house was completely demolished and, it is said, while burning, a music box began to play. The Indians ascribed its music to "spirits."

Following the war, in 1791, the Major built the present house on Montgomery Terrace in Fonda, overlooking the Valley from its sightly location, but unfortunately he never lived to occupy it. His slaves brought his body down the river from the home in which he was then living, doubtless a more or less temporary one on the site of the house destroyed by Sir John in 1780, and he was buried from the all but completed building. Following the funeral, the family occupied the new home.





DIEVENDORF HOUSE

CURRYTOWN

THE original settlers of this name in the Mohawk Valley were Johannes and Heinrich, who came to the Canajoharie district about 1725. "1791 John Dievendorf, born 1700 in Der Schweig married Elizabeth Keller, died 23 February buried 25 February, 10 children, 47 grandchildren, 47 great-grandchildren."

John's will, filed November 12th, 1791, in Montgomery County, makes his son John Jacob his principal heir, to whom was bequeathed "the whole and entire lot of land where I dwell." This John Jacob was born in 1747 and died in 1839. His life was spent in the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys, where he was known as "Esquire Diefendorf." When the Revolutionary War broke out he joined Colonel Klock's Tryon County Regiment. He survived the war and at its close became a pensioner. His wife was Catherine Windecker, who is buried beside him on the old homestead farm.

In a Tory and Indian raid on July 9th, 1781, the Dievendorf home at Currytown, about ten miles southeast of Canajoharie, was attacked and a lad named Jacob Dievendorf was captured and carried off. In the retreat, when pursued by Col. Willett and his militia, the Indians began to kill their prisoners to be rid of them. Seeing what was taking place young Jacob jumped from his horse and ran into the forest. But he was seen, pursued, struck down with a tomahawk, then scalped and left for dead. The militiamen found him unconscious, and took him to Fort Plain where he was given every care. He survived this awful experience and lived to reach the ripe old age of 85. His wound never completely healed although for five long years he was under constant treatment. He, too, is buried on his home farm.

The other pioneer, Heinrich or Henry, is rather obscure, but there is mention of at least four of his children. The first is Captain Henry of the Fifth Company of Colonel Herkimer's Canajoharie Regiment, Tryon County Militia. While in com-

mand of his Company at Oriskany he was mortally wounded by a bullet through his lungs, and died almost as he fell. His name appears on the Oriskany Battlefield Monument with two other Diefendorfs — Johann and John, both of whom were privates.

Captain Henry's will, dated March 24th, 1772, was probated in Albany County, which at that time was the westernmost county, reaching far up the Mohawk. Later this same year Tryon County was created — its boundaries encompassing the western limits of what had been Albany County.

Of the other three children of the first Heinrich but little is known beyond their names, which are given as Jacob, 1740–1816 (who may well have been the parent of the lad Jacob who was carried off in the Indian raid of 1781), Frederick and Barbara.

The census of 1790 lists six families of this name. There is a Jacob Sr., Jacob Jr. and one Jacob; also two Johns, a John Jacob, and a Rosena.

The old Dievendorf homestead was destroyed, as were all others save that of Lewis the Tory, in the Currytown massacre. The house pictured is one of the oldest in the vicinity, having been built immediately following the war, probably by Conrad Mowers, and later was owned and lived in by Henry I. Dievendorf, a brother of Jacob, the lad who was scalped.







VAN ALSTYNE HOUSE

CANAJOHARIE

THE first mention of this name in the Colony is that of Jan Martense Van Alstyne, son of Martin Van Alstyne of Holland, who came to New Amsterdam in 1646. By 1657 he seems to have made his way up to Albany where he owned considerable real estate.

Doubtless some business opportunity presented itself for he sold his property at Albany in 1698 and settled permanently near Kinderhook (about twenty miles below Albany) on the Hudson, where he died. Kinderhook was one of the rapidly growing settlements of that time. His will directed that his son Abraham should inherit the farm, but the other heirs, brothers and sisters, were each to be reimbursed in cash by Abraham for their share.

One of these brothers was named Martin and he it was who went to Canajoharie and there in 1749 built this house and a mill in partnership with Hendrick Scrembling, who had arrived a year previous. The partners were also engaged in the forwarding of freight up and down the river by batteaux, no doubt finding this a profitable adjunct to the milling business, being able to transport their own merchandise in their own boats. Scrembling soon sold his interest to Van Alstyne and it is the latter name which has clung to the old stone house.

The mill was located a short distance above the house on Canajoharie Creek; the significance of the word "Canajoharie" being "The pot that washes itself." The "pot" is a water-worn hole about twenty-five feet in diameter and some eleven feet deep in the bed rock, which at that time was washed clean of dirt and drift by the fall of the water. Through the years the creek bed, which is the bed rock, has been eroded in such a way that a great deal of the flow of water is diverted from the hole which now fills with silt. This mill was a building with massive timbers completed about 1760 and stood until 1814 when it burned under rather unusual circumstances. A Mrs. Isaac Flint, who lived nearby and who was commonly credited with being a witch, was strongly suspected of having something to do with

the origin of the fire. That night, on hearing suspicion attached to her, she fastened a rope over a ceiling beam in her house, put a noose around her neck, and standing on a chair tightened the rope and kicked the chair from under her. She was found soon after but too late to be questioned about the fire.

The Van Alstyne house is now owned by the Fort Rensselaer Club of Canajoharie, and is used for social purposes. It has been enlarged, maintaining the original lines and appearance on the street side, the addition being placed at the rear overlooking the creek. The interior has been preserved as far as possible, the alterations being concerned chiefly with the additions. In the upper story under the eaves of the roof a large room extending the entire width of the building has been set apart, without disturbing its venerable framing timbers, for the display of an interesting collection of early Americana gathered almost entirely from the neighborhood.

The house was never palisaded during the war as were so many of these stone houses which answered as forts. It was, however, put in a state of defense and in it many of the meetings of the Tryon County Committee of Safety were held. There were fifty-three Van Alstynes in the service, fifteen being in the First Regiment Tryon County Militia.

The census of 1790 gives the following families of this name in the Canajoharie district:

Abraham Van Alstyne —

2 males, 1 male under 16 yrs., 3 females, 0 slaves

John Van Alstyne —

3 males, 3 females, 0 slaves

Martin A. Van Alstyne —

1 male, 1 male under 16 yrs., 3 females, 0 slaves

Martin C. Van Alstyne —

2 males, 1 male under 16 yrs., 4 females, 0 slaves

Abraham C. Van Alstyne —

1 male, 4 females, 1 slave

Cornelius C. Van Alstyne —

4 males, 1 male under 16 yrs., 4 females, 0 slave

Nicholas C. Van Alstyne —

1 male, 4 males under 16 yrs., 2 females, ? slaves

John Van Alstyne —

1 male, 3 males under 16 yrs., 2 females, ? slaves

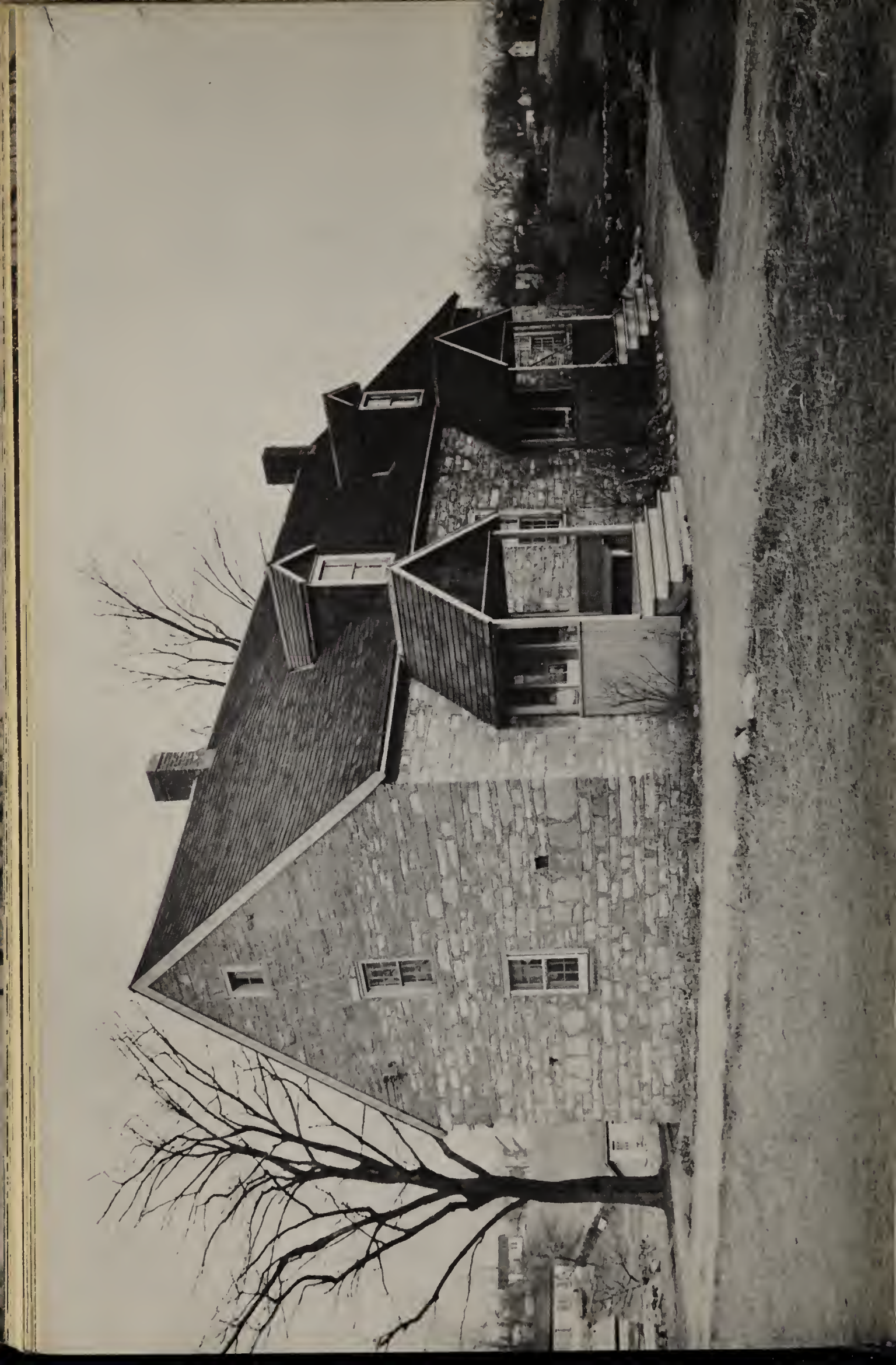
Martin G. Van Alstyne —

2 males, 2 males under 16 yrs., 2 females, ? slaves

Philip Van Alstyne —

1 male, ? males under 16 yrs., 4 females, ? slaves





FORT FREY

PALATINE BRIDGE

HENDRICH FREY of Zurich, Switzerland, came to America in 1688 and located first along the Schoharie Creek in 1689 with a "location ticket" from Governor Dongan, entitling him to 100 acres. His stay in that valley was not for long; indeed it is probable he never actually settled there, for he is credited with owning 300 acres of land at Palatine Bridge at about this time where he did take up residence. This land has come down through the family to the present day. He secured it from the Indians who had evidently forgotten this transaction, for they granted the same land to Cornelius Van Slyke some twenty odd years later, as indicated by the following conveyance dated January 12th, 1713, which covered some 2000 acres:

"in consideration of ye love, good will and affection which we have and do bear toward our loving cozen and friend Capt. Harmon Van Slyke of Schenectady, aforesaid, whose grandmother was a right Mohaugh squaw and his father born with us in the above said Kanajoree . . . it being his the said Harmon Van Slyke's by right of inheritance from his father."

and witnessed by "Lea Stevens interpreter to ye above deed." This land included the Frey tract. However, there seems to have been no trouble over the error for Van Slyke deeded the land in question back to Frey.

The first building Hendrick Frey erected was a small log dwelling in part of which he conducted a trading post. This crude little hut, on the edge of the wilderness some forty miles west of Schenectady, was the only home in this part of the Valley, and to it the English came in 1701 and occupied it as an outpost. They palisaded it and remained until 1713, the closing year of Queen Anne's War.

In 1739, his Indian trading business no doubt in a flourishing condition, Hendrick Frey replaced his log structure with a stone building on the identical site and there it stands today as pic-

tured, two hundred years later. Being of stone, of simple quadrangular outline, there has been little need of alteration or repair, and beyond the replacement of wood trim, porches, and similar details, it is almost entirely in its original condition. The loopholes are still to be seen in its walls, but unlike its predecessor the log trading post, it was not palisaded. It was used again as a fort by the English during the French and Indian War of 1754-1760. Under the building, in the stone faced basement, are the old fireplaces, placed there for more security as well as physical comfort against the bitter cold of those long winter nights. Here Frey and his garrison of English soldiers must have sat many an evening, sipping hot grog and listening to the howling of wind and wolves. Later this basement was used as quarters for the family slaves.

Hendrick Frey, Jr. (1713-1763) was born in this house and it was he who became one of the original patentees of the Stone Arabia grant. It was also the early home of the patriot Major John Frey, the brother of Hendrick Jr. Both boys were educated under the tutelage of Reverend Dunlap at Cherry Valley, but how widely separated were their later lives! Hendrick married a daughter of General Herkimer and in the face of what must have been terrific pressure from both wife and family, he became a Tory, while Major John became a prominent Colonial officer at the very outset of the war.

Major John Frey married Anne Shoemaker, a daughter of Gertrude Herkimer, an own sister to the General. Major John had already seen active military service under General Bradstreet and later served as a Lieutenant with Sir William Johnson at Niagara when but 19 years old. At Oriskany, he fought beside General Herkimer and barely escaped with his life. He was wounded in the arm, taken prisoner, and carried to Canada, where he was held for the better part of two long years.

Major John was a member of the Tryon County Committee of Safety and served in many capacities and on numerous special committees during the war. The records of thirty-one of these meetings have been preserved, the last being dated November 24th, 1775. He was present at the meeting of this Committee

held in the house of Gose Van Alstyne on October 26, 1775, when a motion was

“Moved and Resolved, unanimously, that three members of our Committee shall be sent to Sir John Johnson, to ask him, whether he will allow, that his Inhabitants of John’stown & King’sborough shall form themselves into companies according to the Regulations of our Continental Congress to the Defense of our Country’s Cause . . . ”

Major John’s loyalty to the cause of the Colonies was never questioned, but he was often interrogated regarding the politics of his brother Hendrick during those formulative days. In his brother’s defense he had this to say: “As to my brother Hendrick . . . it must be conceded he was in a trying position. He was an intimate friend of Sir William Johnson and an executor of his will, as well as the appointed guardian of Mollie Brant’s children.”

With this explanation in mind it is easy to understand there were powerful arguments on both sides, which must have made any decision of Hendrick’s a difficult one.

The large stone residence on the crest of the hill overlooking the primitive little “Fort” is the home of Henry Frey, 2nd. The building was erected in 1808 and commands a beautiful view of the river from its snug setting in a grove of characteristic old locusts. The ground about the house falls away on all sides save to the northward, where the road approaches it along a natural grade.




FREY-FRYE



EHLE HOUSE AND MISSION

NELLISTON

N THE edge of the wilderness over two hundred years ago Domine Ehle built his house for his parishioners and his Indian neighbors. And it would be particularly fitting to see it restored and dedicated to the public as a memorial to the man whose efforts made possible the founding of the several churches in this section of the Valley.

The old building cannot be seen from the highway, though a State marker indicates its location. It stands across the field toward the river but under the hill, perhaps a fourth of a mile from the road, just east of Nelliston. The building was located beside the old Indian trail through the Valley. And here, in front of the house, this trail crossed the river at what came to be known as Ehle's Ford. The ford is now submerged by a deepened waterway and the Indian Trail in its metamorphosis became first the "King's Highway" with its lumbering four-horse stages and its plodding ox carts, then a carefully graded right of way adorned with ribbons of steel over which flies the "Twentieth Century Limited."

Jacobus Ehle, who built the building, now almost totally in ruins, was a Palatine German, educated at Heidelberg and ordained in England in 1722. In this same year he migrated to America. There are records of his preachings in the small settlements of the Hudson Valley as he made his way toward Albany. The next year, while living at Albany, he married Johanna Van Slyke of Kinderhook.

Soon after the marriage the couple left for Schenectady and then on to the Schoharie Valley, where they seem to have stopped, at least temporarily. But it was not for long as the Domine was soon preaching at the outposts of the upper Mohawk Valley, and in order to be nearer them left the Schoharie Valley and took up his residence here, building first a log house in 1723, to be replaced in 1729 by the present one-story stone building. From here he made his way up and down the Valley and to the northward to the little settlement at Stone Arabia,

where he founded the Stone Arabia Reformed Church in 1723. Six years later he founded the Palatine Church, the original building being of logs.

In 1752 Domine Ehle's son Peter, who was born in 1729, built the two-story stone addition to his father's house. The brick needed for the flues as well as the interior wood-trim were brought up the river in batteaux from Schenectady. The house was used as a Mission, a dwelling and a tavern, or better say a shelter for traders and trappers off the river, and also as a place of defense, for the building is loopholed, as were practically all buildings of this age in the Valley.

The domine was well thought of by the Indians, to whom he devoted a great deal of his time, not only as a preacher and instructor but as a sincere and helpful friend. Because of this he was always warned of the approach of raiding parties of hostile French and Indians.

In one instance the warning came almost too late. It was already dark and they had only time to gather up a few of their most highly prized possessions. These they hastily buried in the forest near by and fled quickly toward Schenectady. When the danger had passed they returned, but because of the darkness and of the haste in which they had secreted their treasure, they were never able to locate the exact spot and it still remains where they hid it. Persistent searching has failed to bring it to light.

The following is a letter from Domine Ehle to the Reverend Lord Beercroft, reporting on his missionary work:

Canajoharie

December 21st, 1749.

To the Most Reverend Lord Beercroft.

Greeting: I greatly desire, most Reverend Sir, that as an act of the greatest courtesy you have this letter laid before the Society:—

As to the situation of my household it consists of a wife and three daughters with an only son. I live apart from Society, leading a secluded life, and hitherto I have converted many among the people with whom I live, baptising their children and uniting them in marriage, since they are without a regular pastor, and for a long

time have been prevented from sending for another for the administration of the sacrament.

What pertains to my service among the Indians is indeed very well known, that as long as I have lived here among these Mohawks they have almost always carried on business through me. As I visit their farms and baptise both their children and adults (for it behooves the adults to know on bended knee from memory and to recite the Lord's Prayer and the articles of faith with the Ten Commandments) and going among them with an interpreter I join them in marriage. But let me make mention from the time when Reverend Barclay bade us farewell. Thus it behooves me to mention this, because ordained by him: after his departure I had the privilege of attending to all religious matters among the Indians, and from that time also I officiated on this side of (faeram) Sunaxim in the Mohawk Camp.

And in the meantime they often visited me with their children and their relatives as much as they could when there was danger of war, and even we were compelled to flee hence and to seek refuge among our neighbors.

But this I am glad to relate also, that from Camp Oneida quite generally in two villages I converted them. In one village I baptised twenty adults and children and learning that they were not far from our foundation as well as I could by signs and other means of communication, I was able to convert seventeen Tuscaroras, and during those three years in which the Reverend Barclay was away from our upper Camp, I was able also to influence a great number, and I think thirty-one signified their desire and that might have been worth while.

But this also must not be forgotten, that in our upper Camp I administered the Lord's supper with fourteen or fifteen communicants, either Quakers or Quiviguiques, and eleven in the Mohawk Camp.

Concerning the other services, I shall write nothing. Granted that in the eyes of the World my services have been in proportion to my slender powers, if rightly and worthily they are reflected upon, I do not doubt that with Divine help your hearts will be moved to approbation.

As to the assistance of my little friend Salarius, helping in my household, if it please them for the fourth time to help him with some gift, they will be treating him as a friend.

In the meantime, my most honored friends, I have no greater desire than to leave you under divine protection, by praying to God continually in your behalf that in his abode, and by his power, He may furnish you more and more with the worthiest gifts, and that finally when these duties shall have been religiously discharged by each one of you, that it may seem good to Him to receive you all in his own good time into His eternal tabernacle, and to bless you with Heavenly joy.

This from his soul, hopes and prays the most Devoted and Most humble servant of you all,

JOHN JACOB OEL.

In 1777, at the age of 92, the good Domine died and was buried in the Frey cemetery at what is now Palatine Bridge.

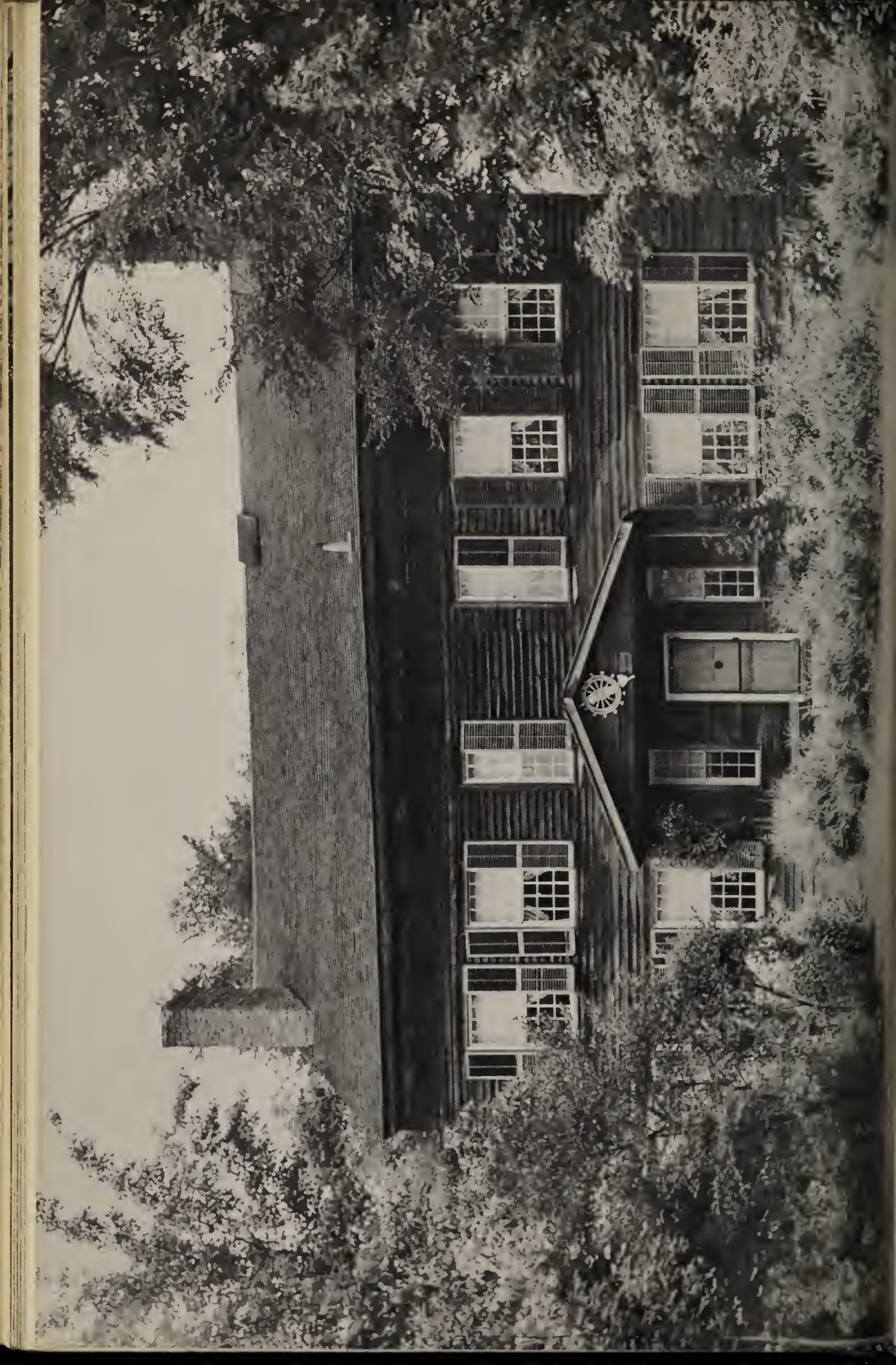
His son Peter was a member of the military force then busily engaged in moving army supplies over the "carry" around the Little Falls. He held a commission as Lieutenant which was signed by Governor Tryon. He also served under Sir William Johnson and later was enlisted in Captain Helmer's Company of the Tryon County Militia at the time of the Revolution. He died in 1807 and his wife in 1821. Both are buried in the old homestead cemetery on the hill just eastward of the Turnpike near the Dygert road. Peter had brothers and sisters but the record is not clear as to just who they were. There were four children in all, the recorded ones being, besides Peter who was born at Schoharie, two sisters named Elizabeth and Magdalen; these two being born prior to 1730 and almost certainly in this house.

Captain Peter had but one son, named Peter P., born in 1768 in the old house. He later married Delia Nellis. When the road was relocated in 1803 and became the Turnpike, Peter P. built a stone house on the new road at its junction with the road leading to Stone Arabia. He was a farmer as his father had been and under his care the amount of cultivated land was greatly increased. The original tract had been a gift of 2000 acres from

the Indians to the "Revd's Petrus Van Driessen and Johannes Ehle," which was ratified by the Crown in 1725. Peter P. and Delia raised several children and their descendents are numerous, many of them still living in the homestead neighborhood.

Like so many of the old houses this one too has its ghosts. These are the ghosts of soldiers wounded at the Battle of Stone Arabia and brought here to die. Their shrieks and moans could be heard for many years after the war, so the neighbors testified.





PARIS-BLEEKER HOUSE

FORT PLAIN

ISAAC PARIS found his way to the little settlement of Stone Arabia about 1737 from the Alsatian city of Strasburg and soon opened a little store and trading post. He must have been a kindly man, not too sharp in his dealings, as some of his competitors were prone to be, and prospered accordingly. His business grew rapidly as did the number of his friends. Shortly before the war he was the proprietor of a large store doing a flourishing business. From one of his advertisements which appeared at that time he says he will sell "by Wholesale or Retail, on very cheap and the lowest terms, in cash or (if required) for credit, or any merchantable country produce."

His merchandise has been "Just imported from London" he states. The number of items listed prove he must have carried a well balanced stock for there was "Silk Damascus, Silk Venetian Poplin . . . Men's Random Thread Stockings . . . Men's and Women's buckles . . . Tea Kettles . . . Horn-Combs . . . Muscovado Sugar . . . French Blankets with Sundry Articles too tedious to enumerate . . ."

When the Revolution was "brewing," Isaac Paris was one of the twelve men who signed the minutes of the first meeting of the Tryon County Committee of Safety held August 27th, 1774, at the home of Adam Loucks at Stone Arabia.

Fort Paris was ordered built here by the Committee of Safety in December of 1776 and named in honor of Isaac. It was of solid hewn timbers with the upper story overhanging the lower on all four sides, thus enabling those above to shoot directly down on the enemy. The fort was destroyed after the war and the timbers found their way into several buildings constructed at about that time.

Following the battle of Oriskany in which Isaac Paris was taken prisoner, Moses Younglove, also a prisoner, who, after a

long period of captivity, finally returned, made an affidavit now on file in the office of the Secretary of State. In it he says:

"Isaac Paris, Esq., was also taken the same road without receiving from them (the Indians) any remarkable insult (except stripping of most of his clothes and all his valuables) until some Tories came up who kicked and abused him, after which the savages, thinking him a notable offender, murdered him barbarously."

On February 14th, 1793, Catherine Paris, the widow of Isaac, was voted a pension by a special act of the State Legislature. This was said to be the first pension granted. Catherine spent her last days in Johnstown with a son, Daniel Paris, a prominent attorney who, active at one time in politics, served in the State Senate. This son married Catherine Irving, sister of Washington Irving. Mrs. Paris is buried in the Johnstown cemetery.

Isaac had two other sons, Peter and Isaac Jr. Peter was killed at Oriskany. Isaac Jr., the second son, 15 years of age when the Battle of Oriskany was fought in 1777, moved from Stone Arabia to Fort Plain to land which had belonged to his father. Along the Indian trail leading southward toward the Susquehanna country and just at the crest of a hill overlooking the Mohawk, he built the house pictured, which is still standing, using it for a residence and store. Like his father he was a very successful business man and made many friends. Trade was very brisk for the war was over and the rich agricultural lands the armies had fought over were now open for settlement. The population grew so rapidly it taxed those already established in business to care for them. Following a severe crop failure in the district south of what is now Utica, Isaac Paris Jr. supplied the settlers with food when starvation faced them. His reply to their appeal in 1789 was certainly from his heart: "No matter about the pay. Your women and children must not be allowed to starve. Take what you need to feed them, and if, at any time in your future you are able to pay for it, it will be well, but your families must not be allowed to starve."

Those women and children for whom Paris had shown such fine consideration were the ones who paid the debt. Ginseng, a root which grew wild in their locality, was an item of trade and barter and to get it in sufficient quantity they scoured the

countryside. And when they sold what they had gathered they balanced the account.

In 1790 Isaac Paris Jr. died at the age of 29 years. Following Isaac's death the next occupant of the house was Henry N. Bleeker from Albany, who married Betsy, the daughter of Colonel Frey; but they did not remain long.

In 1792 a new town was formed south of Utica by the settlers Isaac Paris Jr. had befriended and they named it "Paris" for him. In 1880 with fitting ceremony his remains were disinterred from the old burial ground in Fort Plain and carried to Paris where they now lie, surrounded by his old friends the pioneer settlers and their descendants.

The Revolution took its toll of the Paris family, for two of them went to Oriskany and neither returned. The census of 1790 mentions two "heads of families" of this name, one being Catherine of Canajoharie whose family consisted of three males, one female and one slave. The other is Anthony of Caughnawaga in whose household were two males and three females. Both of these families were doubtless descendants of Isaac of Stone Arabia and from them the name must have spread. Their descendants may well recount with pride and satisfaction the records of their forebears.



A COLONIAL FORT OR BLOCKHOUSE



FORT WAGNER

NELLISTON

THIS old Colonial farmhouse and fort built in 1750 stands on the upper side of the highway a little less than two miles west of Nelliston. An historical marker points the way up a lane lined with stately old elms directly to the house.

The old and the new are easily identified in this instance as the original building is of stone, the addition which is of wood being an elongation of the original structure.

The pioneer settler was Johan Peter Wagner, who with his wife, Margaretha Laucs (Loucks), both Palatines, came to settle in West Camp, a Palatine settlement on the west bank of the Hudson River, just north of where Saugerties is now situated. From there they soon moved to the Schoharie Valley; here they remained some ten years and in 1722 moved to the Mohawk Valley along with some three hundred others, to land given them by Governor Hunter. These Palatines had experienced difficulty in securing land titles in the Schoharie Valley, their attempted settlement being on land already patented to others.

Johan Peter and his wife lived until about 1750 and are buried in the Wagner plot southeast of the house, on the near side of a hill called the "Steilerberg" or "Steep Hill."

There were some five or six children but apparently only one son, a second Johan Peter, born about the time or just prior to the move to the Mohawk Valley. Johan Peter 2nd was a Lieutenant Colonel and fought at the Battle of Oriskany with three of his sons, Lieutenant Peter, George and John. His wife was Barbara "Waggener," according to the records of the Stone Arabia Church. There were in all twelve children to this marriage; five sons and seven daughters.

Barbara, the wife, outlived Colonel Peter — both of them passing on after a long and useful life, victims of nothing more than old age. But even so, Colonel Peter was on his death bed but nine days. Funeral services were held in the Palatine Church and his burial was in the Fort Plain Cemetery.

Colonel Peter's will, signed in 1806 and probated in 1813, leaves the farm to his son Peter and in providing for his wife

Barbara he does "bequeath during her natural lifetime a competent and decent maintenance from my estate and in my house and all the household furniture; also for her own use and disposal a negro woman slave named Rebecca and a negro boy slave named George."

Also directing that his son "Peter shall keep two good milk cows and two sheep for the sole use of his mother, provide her yearly with a sufficiency of good wheat flour, fatten for her yearly two hogs and provide her yearly with five gallons of good rum or spirits."

The following story is told by a Frederick Manheim, a Palatine settler who located near the Wagners. It is repeated here to illustrate the danger to which these early settlers were constantly exposed. The occurrence took place on October 19th, 1777, when a raiding band consisting of some fifty Indians captured twenty-three of the inhabitants of the neighborhood, among them being Manheim and his 16-year-old twin daughters Maria and Christina. Manheim was captured in a field where he was working. Following the raid the Indians made a speedy retreat which lasted four days, allowing scarce time for rest and during this entire time no fire was kindled for fear of capture. A camp was finally made in a

"thick pine swamp which rendered the darkness of an uncommon gloomy night still more dreadful. The Indians ate by themselves. After supper the appalled captives observed their enemies, instead of retiring to rest, busying themselves in operations which boded no good. Two saplings were pruned clear of branches, up to the very top, and all the brush cleared away for several rods around them. While this was doing, others were splitting pitch pine billets into small splinters about five inches in length and as small as one's little finger, sharpening one end and dipping the other in melted turpentine.

"At length with countenances distracted by internal fury and hideous yells the two savages who had captured the hapless maidens, Maria and Christina, leaped into the midst of the circle of prisoners and dragged those ill-fated maidens, shrieking, from the embraces of their

companions. These warriors had disagreed about whose property the girls should be, as they had jointly seized them, and to determine the dispute agreeable to the abominable custom of the savages, it was determined by the Chiefs of the party that the prisoners who had given rise to the contention should be destroyed, and that their captors should be the principal agents in the execrable business.

“These furies, assisted by their comrades, stripped the forlorn girls, convulsed with apprehensions, and tied each to a sapling with their hands extended as high above their heads as possible, and then ‘pitched’ them from their knees to their shoulder, with upwards of 600 of the sharpened splinters above described which at every puncture were attended with screams of distress that echoed through the wilderness. And then to complete the infernal tragedy, the splinters, all standing erect on the bleeding victims, were put on fire and exhibited a scene of extreme misery beyond the power of speech to describe, or even the imagination to conceive. It was not until nearly three hours had elapsed from the commencement of their torments and that they had lost almost every resemblance of the human form, that these helpless virgins sank down in the arms of their deliverer — death.”





REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH

STONE ARABIA



THOUGH the settlement at Stone Arabia had its beginning about 1712, it was not until 1723 that a Patent was issued. It is interesting to note the names which appear on this document, many of them still frequently encountered in the Valley, while others, due to removal of the original settler, perhaps to Pennsylvania, where large numbers of Palatines were settling, have disappeared locally. The names of the grantees as given are: Casselman, Coppernoll, Dillenbeck, Dygert, (Diegart), Emiger, Fox (Vocks), Fink (Feink), Erhart (Erchart), Inland (Ingold), Garlock (Garlack), Lawyer, Nellis (Nelse), Piper (Pieper), Seeber (Siebert), Shawl (Scheel), Shaeffer.

This Patent, known as the Stone Arabia Patent, and the one at German Flatts, known as the Burnetsfield Patent, were of great importance in that they were the first issued which make a direct distribution of land to individual settlers, in such amount as represented a reasonable and immediately usable acreage in contrast with the enormous acreage contained in some of the patents given to court favorites and politicians. The entire extent of the Stone Arabia Patent as issued to this group of twenty-seven settlers was but 12,700 acres, whereas the estate of Sir William Johnson at his death consisted of some 700,000 acres!

This settlement was made in the virgin forest and the first and enormous task of the settlers was to clear enough land to put in subsistence crops. Yet busy as they were, raising enough to live on, they found time in 1729 to build a log church. This was on the site of the present frame building which is the Lutheran Church, and was part of the land of William Coppernoll of Schenectady, the only Hollander among this group of Palatines. The contract for the land was dated June 2nd, 1729, and conveyed fifty acres.

In 1733 a new frame structure was begun but a controversy arose as to the name to be given it. This proved an insurmountable stumbling block, for the Lutherans withdrew and continued in the log edifice while the Reformed group went on with

the new building. This would seem to indicate that William Coppernoll, who would have been of the Reformed group, must have been joined by other Hollanders in the ten years following the settlement. The tract of fifty acres originally conveyed for the church was equally divided between the two groups.

The Reformed Church is the result of a European revival known as the "Reformation" and as the name implies affected the churches of Holland. The term "Reformed" indicates a belief in the symbolic presence of the Christ in the Communion in distinction to the belief of a physical presence as held by Luther and his followers. The term "Protestant," so long used, indicated a protest against the assumed authority of the Church of Rome and its interpretation of the Scriptures. The title "Reformed (Dutch) Church" was adopted in 1867. The seal of the Church is based on the seal of Prince William of Orange. In 1826 the pillars were added to the seal with superimposed stars to suggest an ecclesiastical and heavenly life. The motto above is in Latin, which translated means, "Without the Lord all is vain." The motto below, in Dutch means, "Union makes strength."

The oldest record book of the Lutheran Church at Stone Arabia states the fact that the original Church here was organized by Domine Ehle in 1711, which of course is in error as the Domine did not come to America until 1722. But it is an error of a few years only, for it is known he did found the Church soon after his coming into the Valley, probably about the year 1725.

At the time the settlement was made at Stone Arabia the road along the north shore of the river was opened only as far as Fonda, and it was not until 1726 that a move was made to extend it westward to the present Utica. A realization of this fact helps one to grasp the picture and to realize the difficulties encountered in making the settlement. The river was still the chief artery of commerce.

The Reverend Johannes Schuyler is named as the minister in the earliest records of the Dutch Church, which are dated October 24th, 1743. The Reverend Schuyler is buried beneath the pulpit in the "Old Stone Fort" at Schoharie, which then was the Dutch Church. He was its pastor at the time of his death

in 1779. His wife was Annatje Veeder of Schenectady, whom he married in 1743. Their sixth child, Philip, was the builder of the present stone building at Stone Arabia which he finished in 1788. He is said to have been five years in completing the work at a cost of \$3,378, and at that time it was perhaps the finest church edifice west of Schenectady, the only possible exception being the Fort Herkimer Church. It was the Reverend Schuyler's sister Elizabeth who married Gose Van Alstyne of Canajoharie, whose house is still standing and has been previously described.

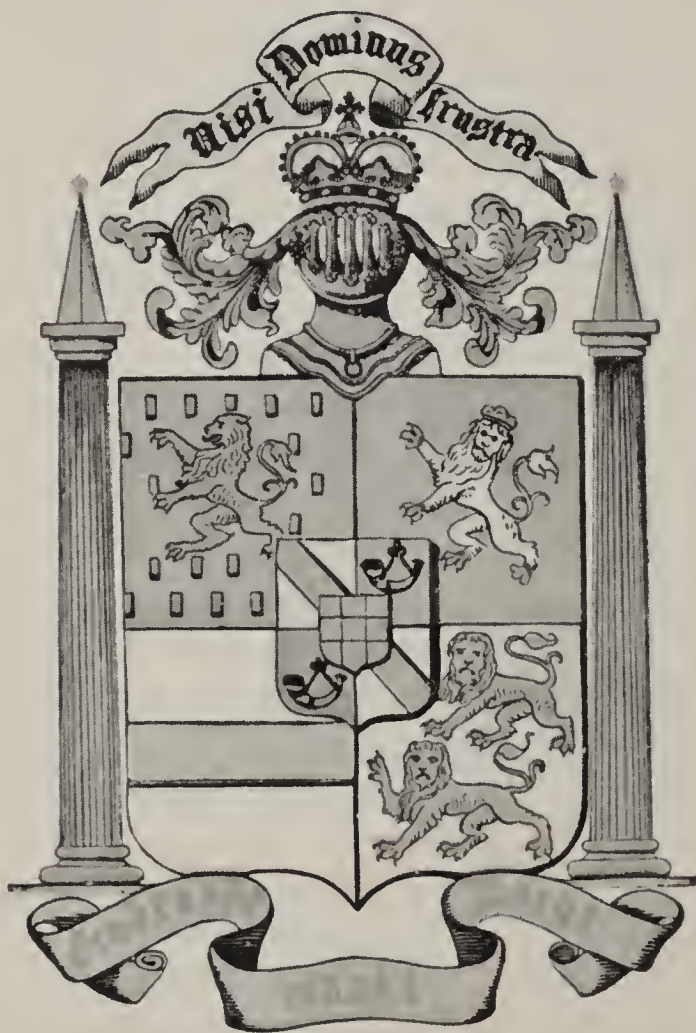
Prior to the building of the stone edifice, both the Lutherans and Reformed groups had frame buildings at Stone Arabia and the "Battle of Stone Arabia" was an effort on the part of the settlers to protect their homes and these churches from destruction in a Tory raid of 1780. The local "post" was known as Fort Paris (after Isaac Paris, one of the early settlers) and was in charge of Colonel Brown of the militia. Word had been sent by General Van Rensselaer of the Colonial Army in pursuit of the raiders, who were under Sir John Johnson, that Colonel Brown should attack the enemy as soon as they appeared and that he, General Van Rensselaer, would attack from the rear. This was a logical and well laid plan as Sir John lay encamped the night before the battle between the two Colonial forces.

Colonel Brown, faithful to his orders, left his fort and was only about a mile from it toward the enemy's location when he engaged them. General Van Rensselaer failed to follow the enemy and attack from the rear as agreed, with the result that Colonel Brown's force, much smaller than that of Sir John, was cut to pieces and the Colonel killed. The Indians, who were a part of the raiding force, scalped and stripped their victims and all retreated up the Valley en route toward Canada, after burning most of the houses and both churches. They were engaged the next afternoon by General Van Rensselaer at the "Battle of Klock's Field."

The bodies of the slain at Stone Arabia were buried in a trench close by Fort Paris. The battlefield is identified by a large inscribed boulder. The body of Colonel Brown was removed later and placed in the churchyard of the present Dutch Church, and a fitting monument erected. In the church ceme-

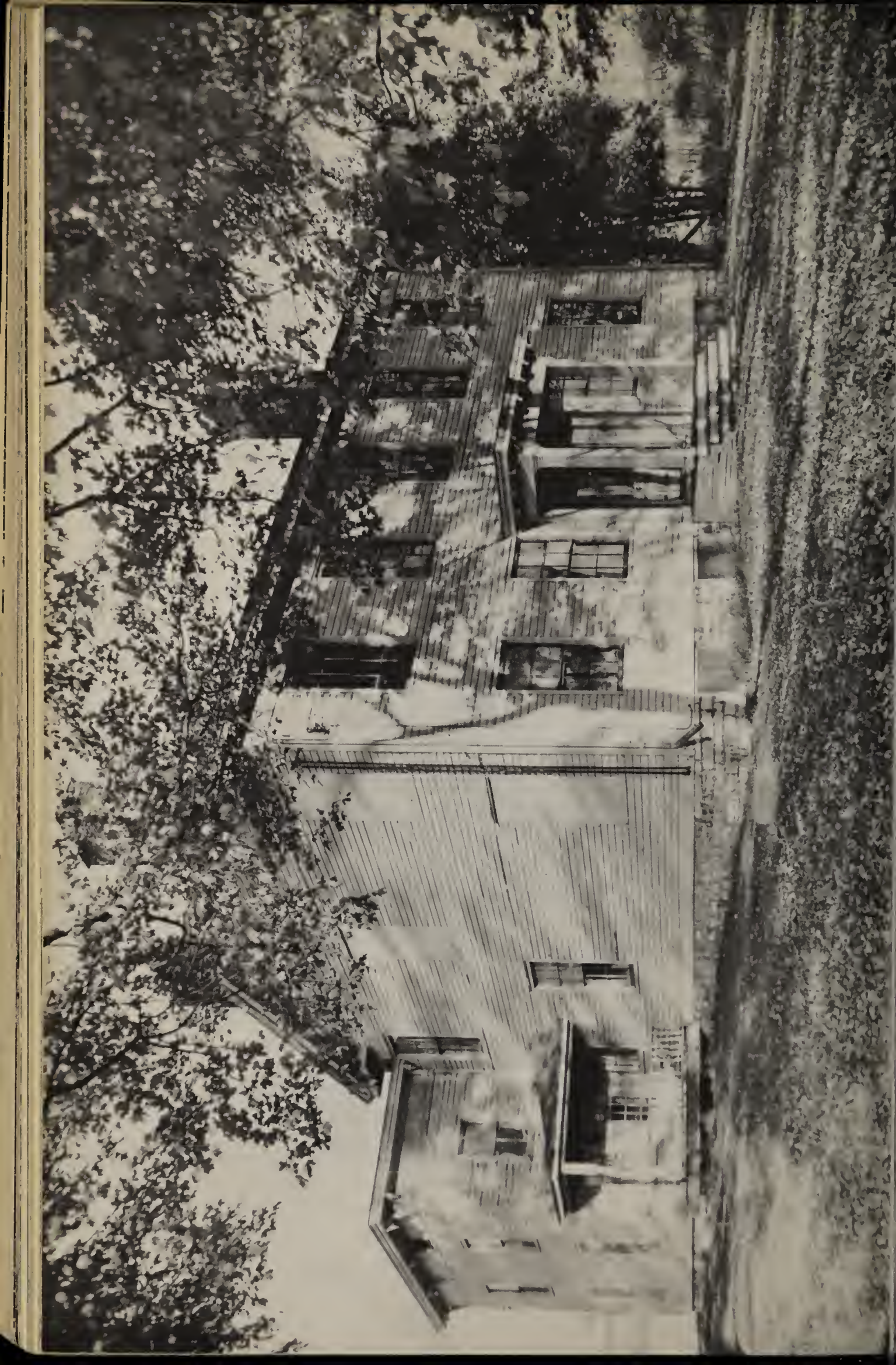
tery are the graves of many Revolutionary soldiers. The location of Fort Paris was a half mile southeast of the church, near the crossroads. Nothing remains of it today.

There is a striking similarity between the churches of this period, such as this one, the one at Palatine, the Fort Herkimer Church, and the "Old Stone Fort" at Schoharie. These four buildings are outstanding, historically and architecturally, among the very few of this age remaining within the entire United States. Their appealing simplicity, the enduring strength of their massive stone walls and the quiet charm of their steeples is indicative of the life and character of their congregation for "By their works ye shall know them."





VIEW AT LITTLE FALLS.



GENERAL COCHRAN HOUSE

ST. JOHNSVILLE

THIS HOUSE was built in 1790 by Major James C. Cochran, for his father Doctor John, on land given him in partial payment for his services as Director General of hospitals through the Revolutionary War. It is located a little more than a mile east of St. Johnsville on a slightly elevation overlooking the river valley.

The owner, Doctor Cochran, was born in Pennsylvania in 1730 and served as a surgeon in the Colonial Army. He was a close friend of General Washington. Following the Revolution, General Cochran was appointed by Washington as Commissioner of Loans, in which position he continued until disabled by a paralytic stroke. He then moved to this house at St. Johnsville where he died in 1803. He was buried in Utica.

Two sons, James and Walter, survived him. Both were Army officers, James with the rank of Major, and Walter as a Captain. James married his cousin, Catherine Van Rensselaer Schuyler, in Utica in 1822. She was the daughter of General Philip Schuyler and was the godchild of General Washington. In 1827 they moved to Oswego. She died there in August, 1857, her husband, Major James, having preceded her in death.

Walter, the second son, seems to have remained longer than his brother at the old home, but by 1817 he had moved to Utica. He was the last of the Cochrans to occupy the homestead. He married, and like his brother moved to Oswego and strangely enough died in 1856, the same year in which occurred the death of his sister-in-law, Catherine Schuyler Cochran. But in this case he was the survivor of his marriage for his wife had preceded him.

An interesting story is told of General Scott who stopped at the house as a guest of the Cochrans on his way west during the War of 1812. His importance was not to be denied, but the hosts were confronted with an empty larder. It is truthfully said that a farm always affords a living, and in this case it was the peacock which was the piece de resistance.

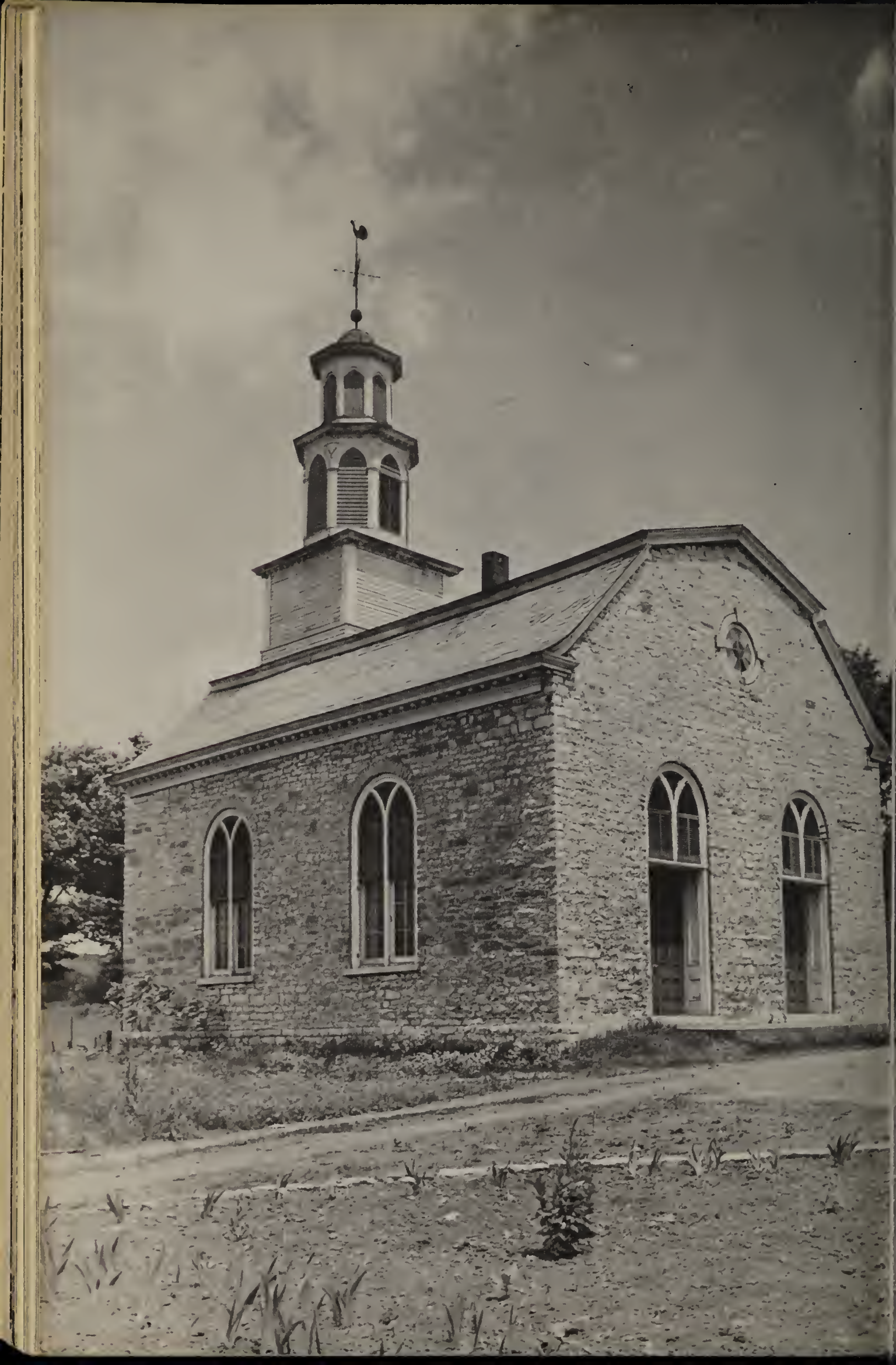
Another famous visitor was Joseph Brant, who stopped here after the war en route to a conference in Philadelphia. His presence was noised about and so great was the hatred of the Valley folks toward him that an angry crowd soon gathered about the house making it necessary to spirit him away before the threatened violence broke out.

Much of the mahogany furniture once in this home was the gift of General Washington to General Cochran, some of it coming from Washington's Headquarters at Newburgh. The Cochrans naturally kept these treasured possessions when they sold their old home.



WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS AT NEWBURG
After a print made about 1800.





PALATINE CHURCH

ST. JOHNSVILLE



ARENT VAN CURLER, after seeing the Mohawk Valley in 1642, wrote to Killiaen Van Rensselaer in Holland that "a half day's journey from the Colonie, on the Mohawk River, there lies the most beautiful land that the eye of man ever beheld."

Someone has said that "landscape without tradition is beauty unadorned." Tradition is a child of time and romance grows with it. But the time must be measured not in months or even years but rather in centuries, so slowly does tradition mature. Over three hundred years have passed since Van Curler wrote his letter and so it is that tradition and romance have entwined themselves about the sturdy old houses, the venerable churches and the ruined forts scattered up and down the length of the Valley. Many of these spots, rich in natural beauty as well, have been made the scene of some of America's most popular historical novels.

The old Palatine Church is in the very heart of the Valley. Here stood the little settlement known as Fox's Mills on the banks of Caroga Creek. The inhabitants were Palatine Germans who had come thousands of miles to find a quiet place where they might live in peace. This was during the period from 1720-1725, when Heinrich Frey and Harmanus Van Slyke, the Indian traders a few miles to the eastward were their closest neighbors. There was another small settlement made also by Palatines on the hills of the northern Valley slope at Stone Arabia some ten miles farther east.

Fortunate indeed was the period of peace which followed the early years of this settlement, for it allowed time for a more permanent establishment of farm homes and buildings than were their primitive log huts and "dug-out" dwellings. The need for a church was answered by the good Domine Ehle, under whose leadership a simple log structure was built in 1729.

The French and Indian raids which had been so horribly cruel and devastating to the Valley just above them did not ex-

tend below the outpost stronghold known as Fort Herkimer. But this does not mean that the inhabitants of Fox's Mills did not suffer. They enlisted in the militia which defended that section of the Valley. But when this war was over there came another period of peace and with it a greater growth and development that carried the settlement of Fox's Mills to its peak of prominence exceeding that of Amsterdam, Fonda, St. Johnsville, Fultonville, Canajoharie, and Fort Plain, all thriving settlements at that time. During this prosperous interval the present Palatine Evangelical Lutheran Church which, as the tablet reads, was "Erbaut in Yarhe Christi 1770," largely through the generous donations of a few parishioners, at a cost of \$3500. The principal donors were the Wagner, Nellis, Reber and Hess families. The church is one of the most famous landmarks along the entire Mohawk Valley Turnpike. There was no bell in the steeple. The worshipers were called to church by a huge steel triangle two inches square and three feet on each side. The noise and peculiar resonance of its tone when struck carried for miles up and down the Valley.

Then came the Revolution and any horrors and sufferings the settlement at Fox's Mills were spared during the previous war was balanced by the almost total destruction of the place. Those familiar with the novel, "Drums Along the Mohawk," may recall this quotation: "Both Lana's parents had been killed in the wiping out of Fox's Mills. Only her married sister was left alive of her whole family."

This is the church in which Lana is supposed to have been married. Only the church, and the little tavern beside it, were spared and this through the fulfillment of a promise made in friendship. When the war broke out a son of Hendrick W. Nellis, the man who had generously given the plot of ground on which the church was built, joined the British Army along with a grandson of old Nellis, and together they went to Canada. Some years later when the raiders were about to burn the church by shooting a flaming arrow into the steeple one of the British officers remonstrated, saying he had pledged his word to his friend Nellis in Canada that the church should be saved. It seems Nellis contemplated returning to his farm adjacent to the Church after the war was over. And so the church was saved

and with it the little tavern still standing alongside. But unfortunately for Nellis the outcome of the war was not as he had anticipated. His lands were confiscated and sold by the American Government. He never returned to reap the benefits of his kindly act.

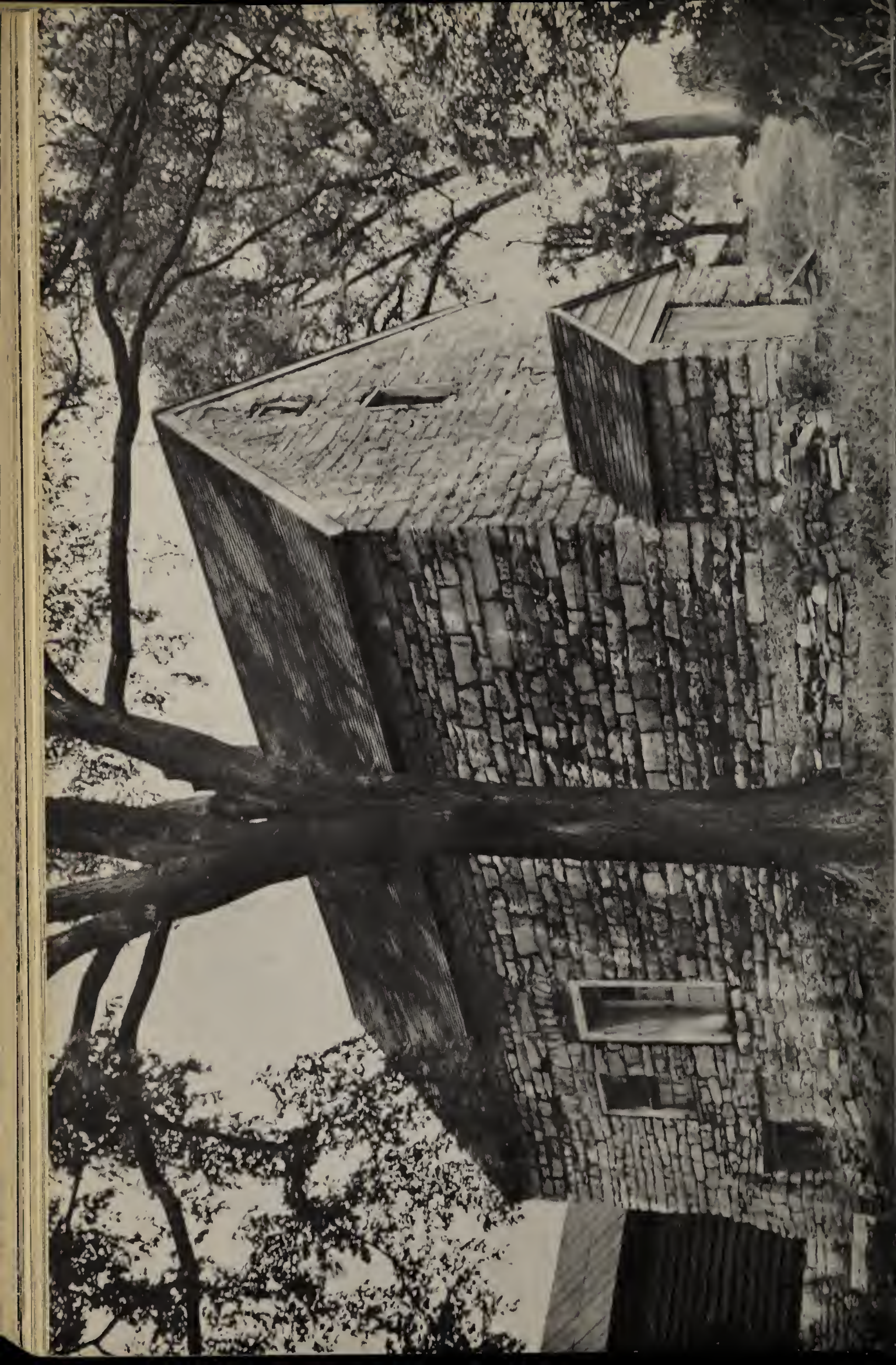
The building remains much as it was built, as viewed from the exterior. But the interior has unfortunately been "modernized" by removing the old elevated pulpit with its pendant sounding-board and the original surrounding galleries.

On the grounds of the church the Army of General Van Rensselaer encamped on the night of October 19th, 1780, when in pursuit of Sir John Johnson and his army. A little further up the valley and to the northward of the Church is the site of one of the early Indian fortified "Castles," and still further on is the old Fort Klock farmhouse near which the Battle of Klock's Field took place.

The old weathercock atop the church steeple has witnessed a panorama of destructive events beyond the wildest dreams of those who put him there nearly two centuries ago. Yet true to his legendary powers of protection, the building has endured through nearly two hundred years under the care of his roving, watchful eye.



*The Chanticleer Weathervane
On the Dutch Reformed Church of 1656,
Still in Use*



FORT KLOCK

ST. JOHNSVILLE

THIS unique house, less than a mile east of St. Johnsville, was erected by Johannes Klock in 1750, replacing his earlier abode on the same site. It is very strongly built with massive stone walls resting on a foundation of solid rock. Perhaps this exact location was selected with an eye to defense for within the walls a living spring of water trickles forth from the rock fissures. Just below, at the foot of the hill, passed the King's Highway, now the New York Central Railroad right-of-way. The house is easily visible from the car windows, standing as it does well up the slopes overlooking the Valley. Its roof is also seen from the State highway, alongside of which is an historical marker commemorating the house and the events which took place in this neighborhood.

The most important of these events was the "Battle of Klock's Field," fought October 19th, 1780. Sir John Johnson, with a combined force of 2500 Tories and Indians, was in retreat after pillaging the rich and fruitful Schoharie Valley. The enemy force was about equal to that which opposed General Herkimer at Oriskany, yet the Battle of Klock's Field was of minor importance because of Colonel Van Rensselaer's failure to follow up his advantage. The enemy had abandoned their baggage, brass field piece, wagons, hundreds of captured cattle and horses and should have been an easy prey for the Colonists. General Van Rensselaer was court-martialed for his failure to capture the enemy and it is said he escaped punishment through political influence. Brant, the Indian Chieftain, was wounded in the heel during this engagement but made good his escape.

In a letter from Governor Clinton, dated October 29th, at Poughkeepsie, reference is made to the destructiveness of the Johnson raid as follows:

"Almost the whole of the intermediate country on both sides of the Mohawk River from Fort Herkimer to Fort Rensselaer at the upper end of Canajoharie, including the settlement of Stone Arabia is burnt and laid waste. On a moderate computation we have lost at least a hun-

dred and fifty thousand bushels of wheat, besides other grain and forage and two hundred dwellings. Schenectady may now be said to become the limits of our western frontier."

Another interesting letter was read before the Schenectady Committee of Safety on July 14th, 1775, which, of course, preceded the Johnson raid:

Canajoharie — July 13th, 1775.

Gentlemen:

Mr. Ebenezer Cox, informed this board that Mr. Peter S. Dygert told this informant that he was informed by a person who we have reason to think has it from good authority that Colonel Johnson was ready with eight or nine hundred Indians to make an invasion of this County, that the same Indians were to be under the command of Joseph Brandt and Walter Butler and that they were to fall on the Inhabitants below the Little Falls in order to divide the people in two parts and were to march yesterday or the day before.

Captain Jacob Klock informed this Board that this morning, about an hour before day three Indians of Fort Hunter came to his house from Oswego on their way home, that he was informed by a free Negro man, a Servant of him, that they each had a bag of powder on their horses, that they stayed about an hour and then went off in great haste.

From these and other concomitant circumstances we have but too much reason to think it is true, and that all our enemies in this county will appear in arms against us, as soon as the Indians are nigh to us, which from the above information we must expect in a few days.

We have sent off a party of People by way of a scout, to find out if possible, the route of the Indians (176) and give us early intelligence.

Our ammunition is so scant that we cannot furnish Three hundred men, so as to be able to make a stand against so great a Number.

In these deplorable circumstances we look up to you for assistance both in men and ammunition to save this Country from Slaughter and Desolation which we beg you will not be backward to afford us as soon as possible.

We have ordered some of our Companies up toward the little Falls, who are to keep Scouting Parties out and we intend to keep sitting until such time as we can be Convinced of our Safety.

This is more alarming to us, as we shall in a few days be obliged to begin with our Harvest. Men are therefore absolutely necessary.

We beg of you to forward this by express to Albany and Copies from there to the Provincial Congress and to General Schuyler.

Mr. Dygert was obliged to promise not to disclose the Person's Name, who informed him of the above but be assured that the Person is well acquainted with the Indians, and therefore, if found out is in great danger. We are Gent.

Your most Obt. and Humble Servants

By order

To the Committee of
Schenectady and Albany

Christ. P. Yates

Christopher P. Yates was chairman of the Tryon County Committee of Safety which was formed in the spring, the first full meeting being held but six weeks previous to the date of this letter. The opening paragraph of the letter sounds more like gossip than military intelligence, but in this case secrecy was absolutely necessary. It was only two months after the first shot had been fired at Lexington and in so short a space of time it was impossible to know for a certainty friend from foe. Then, too, this business of making war on one's own neighbors was strange to such men as composed these committees.

The east cellar door of Fort Klock opens into a stone walled chamber without windows and paved with stone. The cellar is partitioned into two nearly equal rooms by a heavy north and south stone wall. In a corner of the room to the west there is a pool fed by the spring previously spoken of which is capable of furnishing the occupants of the house a never failing supply of water. There is also an outside cellar door leading from this west room through the south wall. The entrance to the cellar from the floor above is by a narrow, steep stairway, into this west room. Here may be seen the huge floor timbers overhead

while others equally large are seen in the northwest room on the ground floor. The interior of the house has been much altered through the years. Part of the south foundation wall is out of place, making it necessary to put props under the ground floor beams. Otherwise the building seems in condition to stand another 175 years. This old house has had the honor of sheltering Generals Schuyler and Clinton; also Alexander Hamilton, Brant, and John Jacob Astor, the latter's visit being on business in connection with his fur buying. Doubtless one of the Klocks was his agent. It is interesting to note that Mohawk Valley furs helped lay the foundation of one of America's greatest fortunes.



KLOCK



Indian Castle Church.



INDIAN CASTLE CHURCH

FORT PLAIN

THIS quaint structure was built in 1769 under the direction of Sir William Johnson and at his own expense, on land donated by the Indian, Joseph Brant. It was dedicated the next year as an Indian Mission. Its name is derived from the fact that as early as 1642 an Indian "Castle" or stronghold was located here. That was the year that Arent Van Curler, as a representative of the Van Rensselaer interests at Albany, journeyed to this place in company with two other Dutchmen for the purpose of securing the release of Father Jogues, a Jesuit missionary who was held prisoner here. Van Curler made the Indians an offer of six hundred florins which they refused, but they did make him a promise that they would spare the lives of their captives.

Two years later, Father Jogues, still a prisoner, was taken to Albany by a band of Mohawks. Here he contrived to see Domine Megapolenses, the Dutch minister, and with his help was stowed aboard a "yacht" returning to New York. This term "yacht" was commonly applied to the sailing vessels of that time.

Indian Castle was the home of some of the most famous personages of the Mohawk Nation. Molly Brant, the consort of Sir William Johnson, lived here, as did Joseph, Molly's brother. Hilletie Van Slyke, the half-breed Indian of Schenectady who later became Christianized and assisted in the translation of part of the Bible into the Mohawk language, also made this her home for a time. This, too, was the home of Hendrick, King of the Mohawks.

When Sir William built the church he also built a blockhouse nearby and named it "Fort Hendrick" after his old friend the King. The church now stands in an open field with a small lane leading to it from the highway, Route 5S, but no sign of the blockhouse remains, though a marker points to its former location.

Along the hillside just west of the church are some slight depressions which are probably remains of early burials. The

cemetery is now up the hill behind the church. The farmhouse at the roadside is said to stand within the bounds of the stockade which surrounded the fort, while just behind this house stood the home of King Hendrick. The outlines of a cellar, visible until recently, marked the location where once stood Joseph Brant's house.

The church, the only remaining building, is of no particular architectural interest. It is a simple frame structure, painted a dead white, and because of its age has required a great deal of renovation. Originally it stood north of the road and was painted to resemble a stone building. Its steeple is a replacement, patterned after the original. The window sash are still made up of small panes but the glazing is new.

An interesting story is told of the church bell which the Indians attempted to carry away to Canada. Its accidental ringing aroused the settlers who started in pursuit of the Indians, who, to avoid capture, were forced to throw the bell overboard while crossing the river. The bell was recovered later but in a cracked and useless condition.

Regular church services are no longer held here. However, the building is often used for patriotic and memorial services.



FALSE-FACE MASK



Herkimer's Home as it appeared one hundred years ago



GENERAL NICHOLAS HERKIMER HOME

LITTLE FALLS

GENERAL NICHOLAS HERKIMER, the eldest son of John Jost and Catherine Herkimer, was born in 1728 in a log cabin built by his father about 1723, just east of the present Fort Herkimer Church. Later, in 1740, his father built a stone house which was destroyed when the Erie Canal was built.

In 1754 Nicholas, now twenty-six, moved below the Falls to land given him by his father, living probably in a log house while the "brick mansion" was being built. The architecture is credited to Samuel Fuller of Schenectady. It is typically Dutch Colonial with its gambrel roof, and remains almost in its original condition. There is a broad central hall with four rooms on each floor. The basement is flagged with rough stone and its deeply recessed windows are proof of the thickness of the foundation walls. The woodwork, paneling and the wide floor boards, as well as the hardware, are of great interest. The lock on the front door is a massive affair, its actual measurements being ten inches in height and sixteen inches across.

Outside toward the rear is an underground vault with arches of heavy stone. It is said to have been used as a storehouse by the Tryon County Militia. The slave quarters and barns have disappeared.

General Herkimer, wounded at the Battle of Oriskany, was brought to this home and died ten days later. The immediate cause of death resulted from an amputation of his leg. The operation was performed by a Dr. Robert Johnson, a man of ability, detailed to the case by General Arnold, on the morning of August 16th. The patient died the evening of the same day. Dr. Johnson's report is in part as follows:

"Yesterday morning I amputated General Harcomer's leg, there not being left the prospect of recovery without it. But alas, the patriotic hero died in the evening — the cause of his death, God only knows. About three hours before his departure he complained of pain. I

gave him thirty drops of laudinum liquid, and went to dress Mr. Pettery. I left him in as good a way as I could, with Mr. Hastings to take care of him. When I returned, I found him taking his last gasp, free from spasm and sensible. Nothing more surprised me but we cannot always parry death so there is an end of it.

General Arnold left yesterday morning with positive orders to follow him this evening or tomorrow morning. I sent for Scull to take care of the General and Pettery. He is just now arrived. I propose to have Pettery removed to Palatine where Scull and two regimental mates will take care of him and the others wounded. This evening, I will pursue Gen. Arnold and I suppose will overtake him at Fort Dayton.

The place and the hour of glory draws nigh. No news from Fort Schuyler. I am, dear Doctor, your most obedient and humble servant."

(Signed) "Robert Johnson."

The "Pettery" referred to in the letter was Dr. Wm. Petry, born in Germany, who had served as surgeon and doctor at Ft. Dayton (Herkimer) 1776-79. He it was who dressed General Herkimer's leg on the battlefield. Dr. Petry's wound, received at Oriskany, was also in the leg, which explains the care to be administered by Scull.

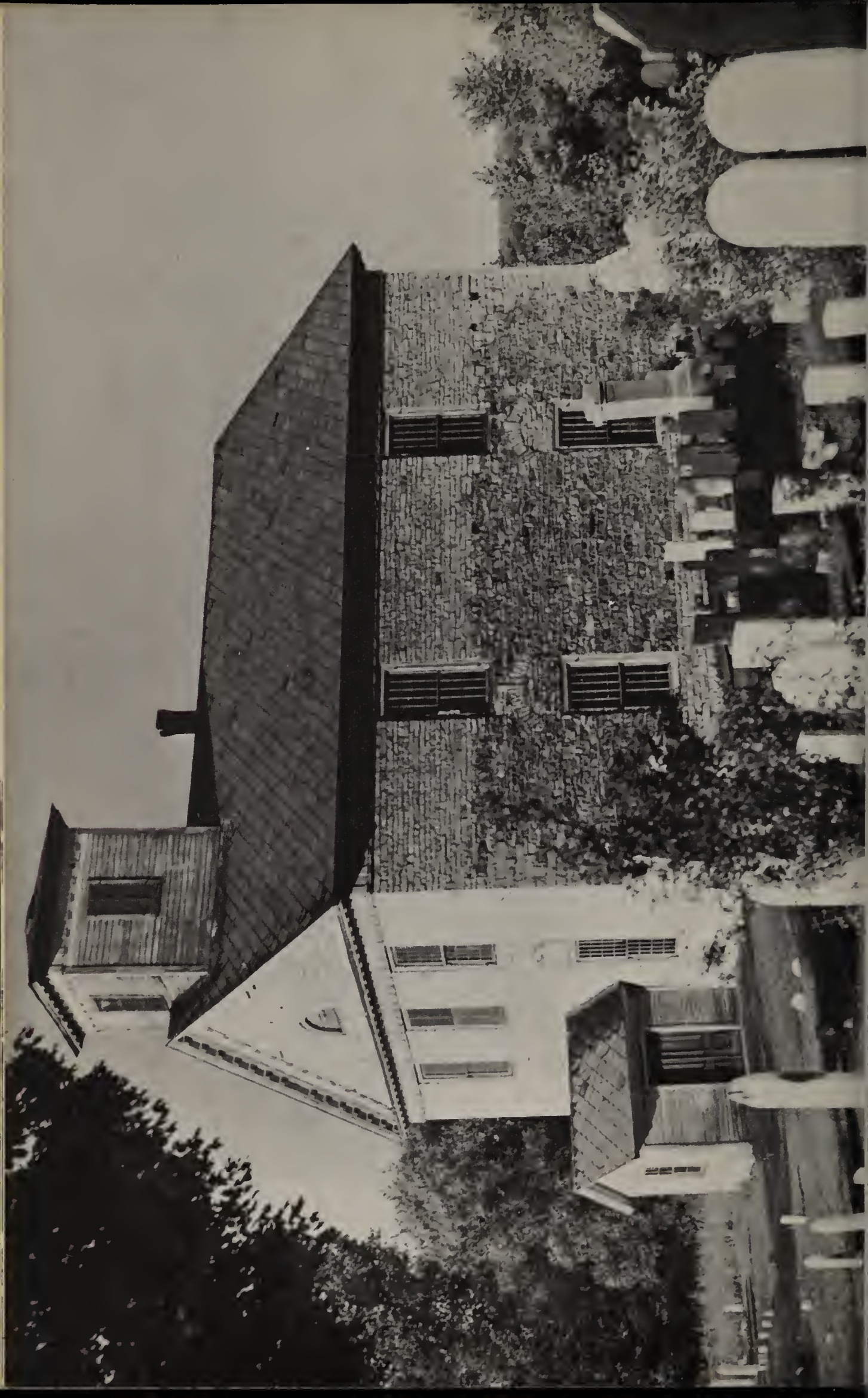
General Herkimer was in the southeast corner room on the second floor at the time of the operation. After the leg was taken off, two boys buried it in the garden. Shortly after, the General said: "I guess you boys will have to take that leg up and bury it with me for I am going to follow it." In the meantime, Colonel Willett called to see the General and found him sitting up in bed, smoking his pipe. But his strength ebbed toward evening, and he called his family to him, read to them composedly from the thirty-eighth psalm, "Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation." He then closed his Bible, sank back upon his pillow and died.

He was buried in the family cemetery just to the rear of the house. In 1896 the State Legislature appropriated funds to erect


the present monument over the grave. It was dedicated that year with appropriate Masonic ceremonies. An excellently executed figure of General Herkimer, cast in bronze, stands in the City Park at Herkimer, the work of Burr C. Miller.

General Herkimer left no children. The house passed to his brother George, then to a son of George, the Hon. John Herkimer, who lived here until 1815, at which time it passed out of the Herkimer family. It was bought by the State of New York in 1914 and is open to the public and visited annually by thousands. The location is just east of Little Falls, south of the river, which it overlooks.





FORT HERKIMER AND FORT HERKIMER CHURCH

AUNT and gray, impressive in its simplicity, appealing in its loneliness and a tombstone to its early pastors, the church's truncated weatherbeaten steeple rises sturdily above the hundreds of graves scattered at its base in proof of the solidarity of its buttressed stone walls and the honest labor that went into them. Old Fort Herkimer Church is perhaps the oldest remaining House of God in all New York, save only the Sleepy Hollow Church at Tarrytown, which was completed before 1699.

The exact date of the beginning of the Fort Herkimer Church is not known, but the site was donated in 1730. The first church building, erected in 1725 was, in the natural course of events, built of logs, but about 1737 the present building was begun. Halted in the building by the French and Indian War and by the impoverished condition of its parishioners thereafter it was not completed until 1767. This date accompanied by the initials J. H. E., are cut in a stone set in the north wall over the original doorway. The letters stand for John Jost Herkimer, the builder, the letter "E" being the initial letter of the German word "erbaut" (built). Originally its walls were eight feet less than their present height. The entrance was also changed from the north to the west side, and the pulpit moved to the east end. Admirably suited to defense, the building formed a part of the stockaded fort built here in 1786 under the administration of Sir William Johnson.

John Jost Herkimer's early log house, erected about 1723, stood a half mile east of the church. A recently erected tablet at the roadside identifies the location. When he built a stone house, maintaining in it a store and trading post, the place immediately became a "port" for all river travellers and traders. It was known as Fort Herkimer by the English and it rightly deserved the name, for it was the only stone house in the western end of the Valley. There is a reproduction of the original ground plans entitled, "Plans and Profile of Retrenched Work

round Herkemeis house at Ye German Flats, 1756," which shows an elongated quadrilateral with one long side facing the river at the north. The four corners are not true "corners" but spear-shaped projections (bastions) which allowed the defenders to fire down the sides of the palisades. A gate is shown in the north wall and just outside is the "Smith's Shop." Directly inside the gate is what was the Herkimer house, called on the plan the "Old House." To the west of it was a "Guard Room" in front of which a well is shown. To the east of the "Old House" a "Stone House" is indicated.

To the Indians it was known as "Fort Kouari," the last word being the Indians' name for old John Jost. He earned the nickname by an act of kindness. He had been poling along the upper river, looking for a rich tract of land he hoped he might buy from the Indians and there carve out his homestead. So far he had been unsuccessful. Apparently the Indians were not disposed to sell more land. But here, at a bad rift in the channel, he went ashore to look about. In the forest he met a party of Indians who had made a dug-out canoe from a large log and were unable to launch it. Seeing their difficulty and also mindful of his own purpose, he soon had the canoe in the water, much to the amazement of the Indians, who immediately dubbed him "Kouari" (the bear) because of his great strength. And he had his agreement from them for the land he so much wanted to buy. The following description of the house he built was given by one of the local residents from a personal knowledge of it:

"The building was of stone, forty feet wide and seventy feet long, two storys high with a basement. The roof was very steep and covered with oak shingles three feet long. The walls of the building were over two feet thick, pierced with six windows, six portholes and a door on the front or north side besides the front windows in the basement, wide enough to drive a team through.

The basement was under the east end of the building and under the west half of the house was a cellar, each about 35 feet square. The only opening in the west end was a square window in the upper story.

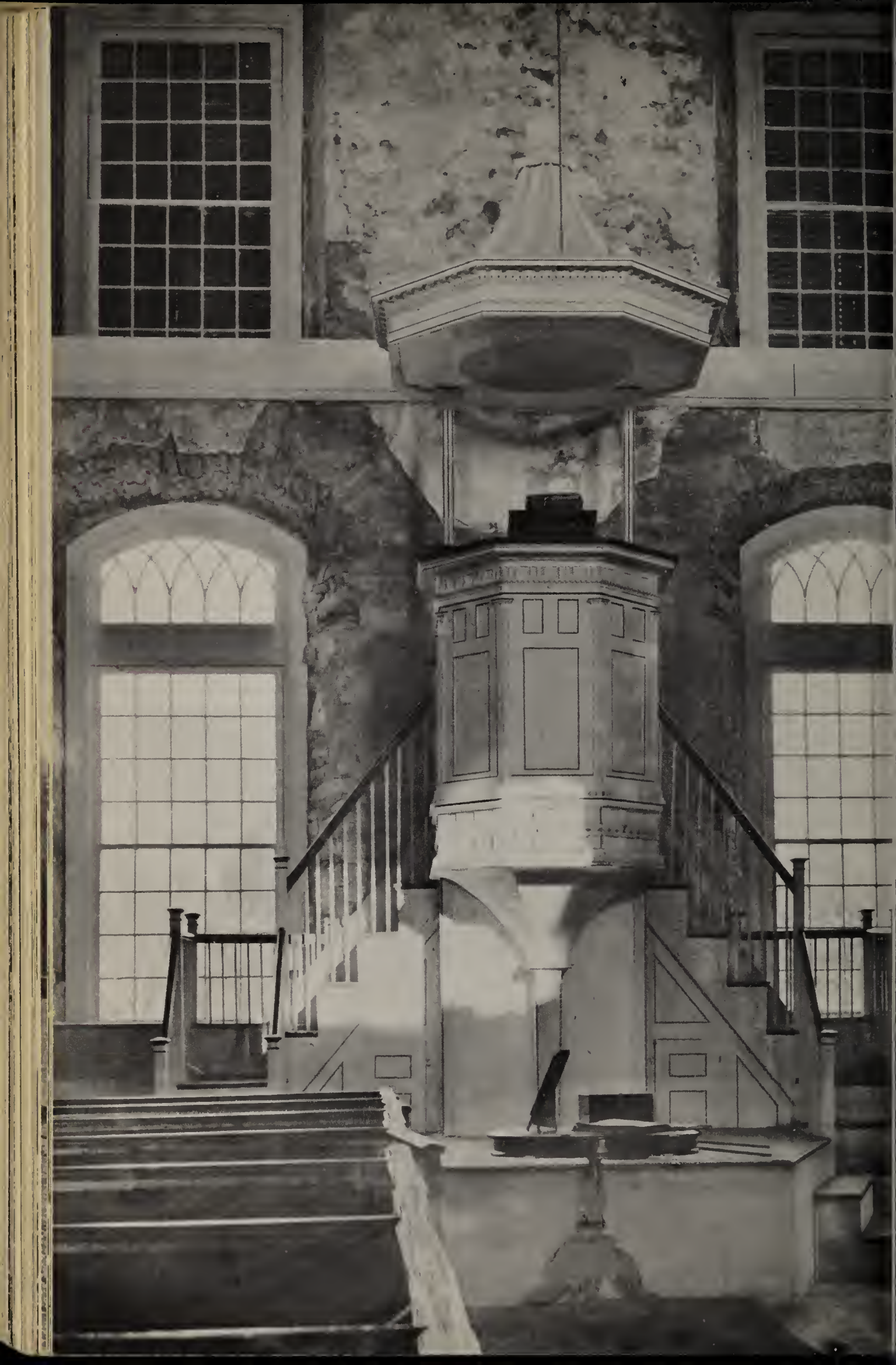
The main entrances to the building were two doors, one on the south and the other on the north side. The hallway, running through the middle of the building from north to south was about twelve feet wide. Near the north end which was then the front were two doors, one opening into the east and the other into the west room, the house being divided into two rooms on the main floor, and the east room subdivided into a large kitchen and a small bedroom and a pantry.

A little farther on in the hall was the grand staircase, broad and easy of ascent, made of white oak leading to the second story which was divided into three rooms, a bedroom over the hall at the head of the stairs and a large room in each end of the house. The broad old fireplaces, both in the lower and upper rooms with 'Pot-hook and trammel' and the traditional backlog and fore-stick blazing upon the old andirons on a cold day, gave the grand old rooms an air of comfort and cheerfulness."

John Jost Herkimer was one of the most widely known and influential men in the Valley and with him the English Government contracted for supplies to be sent up to Fort Oswego — not canned goods, green vegetables, tomato and orange juice, but corn meal, salt pork, candles and rum. These were his principal items of stock along with powder and lead, rough cloth and duffels, which he traded to the Indians for furs. Someone has computed the average rate of profit on this trading business: for every dollar's worth of rum sold, the trader took furs worth \$20.00. No wonder it was a booming business! In prosaic lines of endeavor it took a month to earn one-quarter as much as could be gained for one dollar in trade. The profits of one trading expedition into the wilderness equalled the earnings of several years of hard work, but there was always the chance of not getting back alive.

John Jost Herkimer was merchant and trader as well as farmer. He lived at his outpost over fifty years (when he wasn't away fighting) and raised a family of thirteen children, along with his corn and peas. He died in 1755 with war still rumbling in his ears.

The old Herkimer home, the fort buildings, the parapets and palisades have all passed away, strangely enough leaving the



church, which is the oldest building, the sole survivor. Within the church is an excellent example of an elevated pulpit flanked by a flight of stairs on either side. Over the pulpit hangs a massive sounding board, beautiful in the simplicity of its lines and ornamentation. One can visualize in it the good Domine Rosenkrantz (he of the "creaking knees") preaching to his congregation as described so lucidly in the novel "Drums Along the Mohawk." In fact many of the scenes of that novel are laid in and about the buildings herein described. The pews of the church are quaint, stiff and severely plain, and each is entered through its own door.

The English erected the fort as a secondary line of defense and as a storehouse from which to reinforce and supply Fort Oswego, which was their western outpost. Yet in later years it became the scene of great activity. Sir William Johnson was here in 1756, and again in 1772, in company with Governor Tryon to review the Provincial Militia. Colonel Marinus Willett commanded here for a time; Arnold was here in 1777, and Washington stopped here in 1783 on an inspection trip through the Valley.

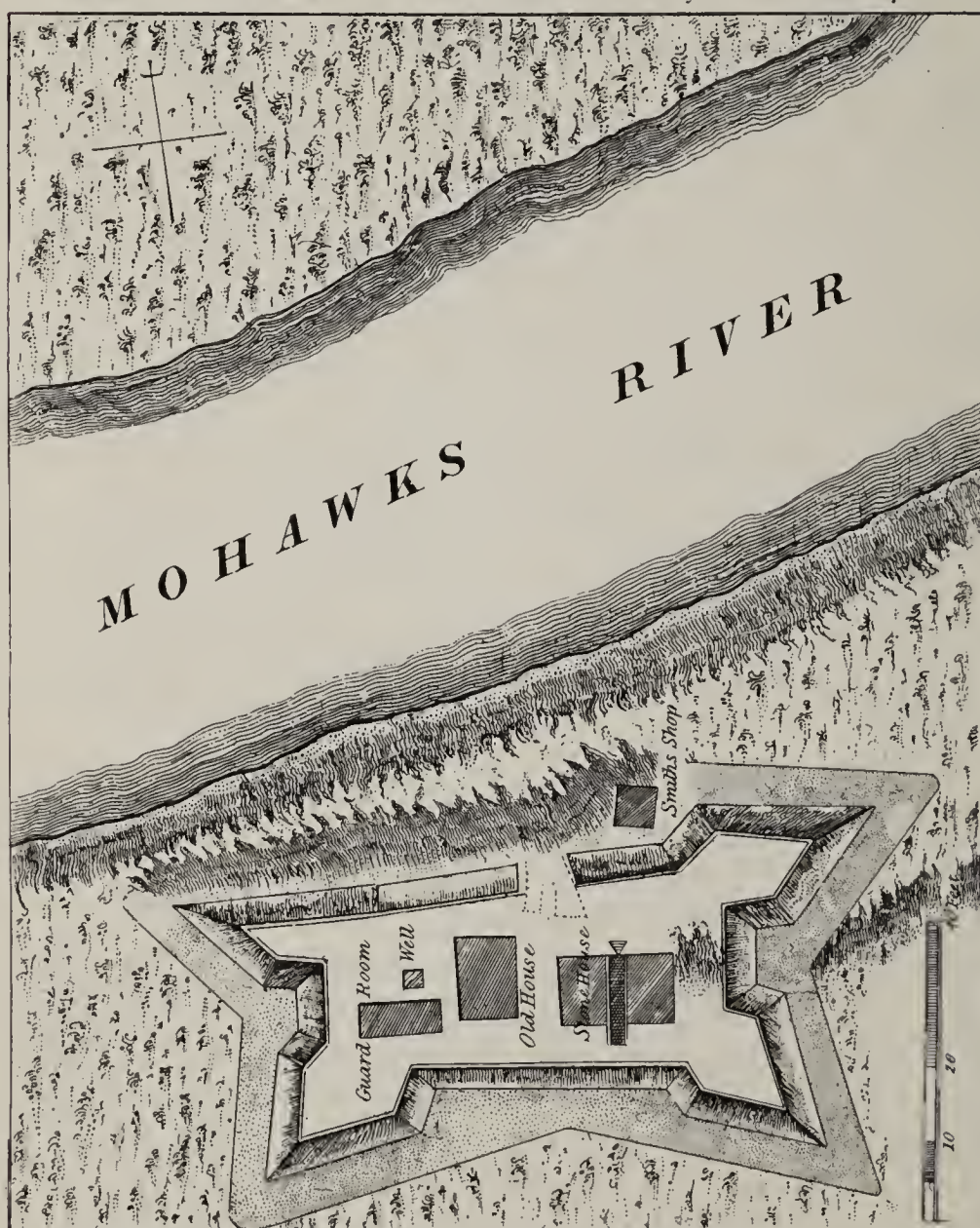
The neighborhood was raided in 1757, the brunt of the attack falling on the north shore. The next year the south side of the Valley was attacked. This was, of course, during the French and Indian War. In 1782, at the time of the Revolution, a force of some 400 Tories and Indians burned and destroyed 120 houses and barns and over 600 head of livestock in this immediate neighborhood.

First known minister at this church was the Reverend Johannes Schuyler, followed in 1733 by Reverend George Michael Weiss, the first "permanent" pastor in 1746. Abraham Rosenkrantz served as pastor from 1752 until his death in 1796. He was beloved by all his parishioners and in fact by all the settlers of the Valley for he preached not only at Fort Herkimer Church but at Canajoharie, Stone Arabia and at Schoharie. In the raid of 1757 he was saved through the insistence of friendly Indians, who, after warning the inhabitants, forced the minister to cross the river to safety. He married a sister of General Herkimer. He was buried, at his own request, under the pulpit he had so

faithfully filled and here he still lies. His was one of the largest funerals ever held here.

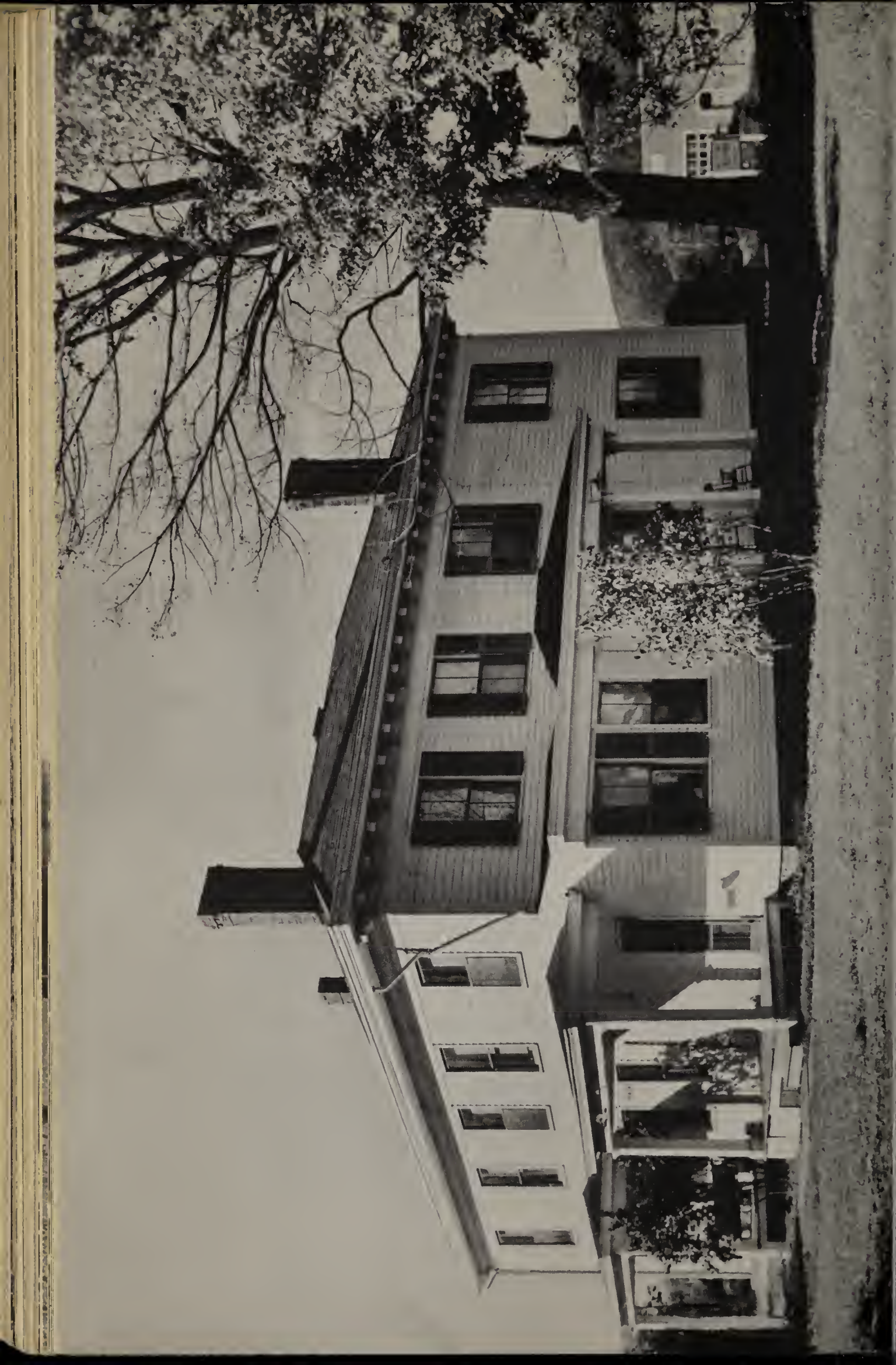
The history of the church is intimately associated with the history of the early families of the settlement. Its records and its gravestones are a mine of information to those interested in the genealogy of this section of the Valley.

Plan and Profile of Retrenched Work round Harkemeis house at German Flats 1756





Corn Husk Dolls



THE SHOEMAKER TAVERN

MOHAWK

THIS very old home — indeed it is reputed to be the oldest house continuously occupied as a dwelling in the present village of Mohawk — was built by a family named Shoemaker. The deed to the land came direct from the English Government in the form of a patent. The date of building is thought to be 1772.

At the time of the Revolution there were several branches of the Shoemaker family, some of whom were Tory sympathizers, and this house was the secret meeting place for those of this mind. Consequently it was spared from fire and destruction in each of the Tory raids in the Valley.

Following the Battle of Oriskany, Walter Butler, the Tory whose home still stands near Fonda, was sent through the Valley to recruit British sympathizers and scatter dissension in the American ranks. It is difficult to understand how such a mission could have been conceived, for following Oriskany feelings were running high and capture must have seemed almost certain. Perhaps Sir John Johnson, the instigator, underestimated the fervid patriotism of the majority of the people or overestimated his own importance, or perhaps he was grasping at a "last straw" as provisions for the British troops surrounding Fort Stanwix were running short.

The troops from Fort Dayton (Herkimer), learning of a secret Tory meeting at the Shoemaker house, made a surprise attack, and Walter Butler with others was captured. Among Butler's papers was a letter addressed "To the Inhabitants of Tryon County" and signed by Sir John Johnson and others which said in part:

"You have no doubt, great reason to dread the resentment of the Indians on account of the loss they sustained in the late action (Oriskany) and the morbid obstinacy of your troops in this garrison (Fort Stanwix) who have no resource but in themselves; for which reason it is become your indispensible duty, as you must answer the consequences, to send a deputation of your principal

people to oblige them immediately to what, in a very little time, they must be forced, — the surrender of the garrison — ”

General Benedict Arnold, then in charge of the relief expedition of the American forces to Fort Stanwix, tried Butler as a spy and found him guilty. Narrowly escaping hanging, he was sent a prisoner to Albany, where for a time he was confined but finally managed his escape.

The old tavern is famous as having been the stopping place of Washington while on his tour of the Valley in 1783. He is said to have had dinner on the lawn in front of the house.

Those who read Walter Edmonds' "Drums Along the Mohawk" will remember the Shoemaker Tavern as the meeting place of Nancy Schuyler and her red-coated lover, Jury McLonis.

The Shoemakers were early settlers as shown by the fact that one Rudolf Shoemaker signed the petition in 1769 for funds with which to repair the Herkimer Church. Another, this time a Thomas Shoemaker of German Flatts, petitions on May 2nd, 1781, to Governor George Clinton:

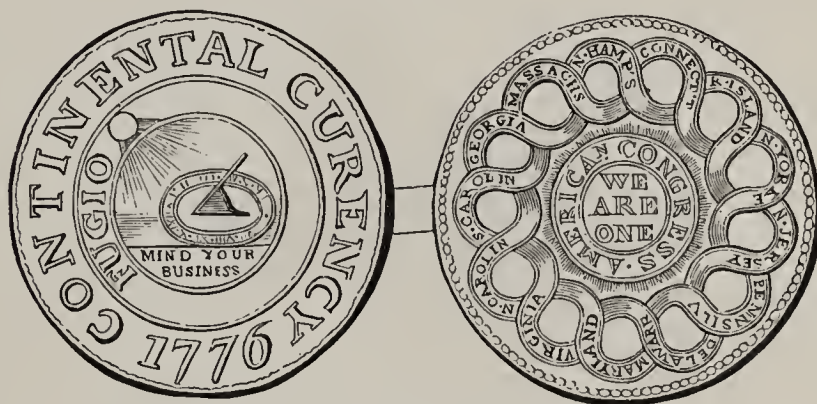
“That on the fifth of August last, my wife and two children was made prisoners by the Savage Enemy; which has left me in a Deplorable Situation with three children. Your Petitioner humbly begs your Excellency would please to point out to him some means by which he may have his Wife and Children restored to him again; as the difficulty attending him with three children left without a Mother makes the situation of your Petitioner truly miserable — ”

Moses Younglove, a physician attached to the American Army and captured at Oriskany, was finally exchanged and served through the remainder of the war. A chance bill for his services reads: “May 28th (1781) Nath Shoemaker, wounded with a ball through his breast; dressed twice a day for eight weeks: £4, 10.” From the date given one would judge the wound was received during an engagement in connection with one of the Indian raids.

There are two Shoemakers: Rudolph Jr., of Canajoharie, a lad of but fifteen, and Thomas of Herkimer, mentioned on the

roster of troops engaged in the Oriskany Battle. However, this list, though it does contain over 400 names, is supposed to represent but a half of those who actually marched into the fight. There was also a Major Honyoast (John Joseph) Shoemaker, born 1747, who was attached to the Tryon County Militia from the Kingsland German Flatts District in 1778. He was a son of Rudolph (one of the original patentees) and Gertrude Herkimer, a sister of General Herkimer. And so it is seen there were some Shoemakers who were loyal patriots if others were Tories.

The building has been considerably remodelled but is in an excellent state of preservation and again in use as a tavern. But now the guests arrive, not in coaches or on horseback, but in big shiny creations that skim over the concrete "trails," not at six but sixty miles an hour!



FAC-SIMILE OF THE FIRST MONEY COINED BY THE UNITED STATES.



REVEREND KIRKLAND HOME

CLINTON



AT THE EDGE of the campus of Hamilton College stands a simple little cottage, once the home of Reverend Samuel Kirkland. Close by it is his grave. His birthplace was at Norwich, Conn., and the great distance between these two is a modest measure of the field of his activities.

He was born December 1, 1741, the son of a Scotch Congregational minister, the tenth among a family of twelve. At nineteen he was a student at the school of Eleazer Wheelock at Lebanon, Conn., one of the prominent schools of that day and the one to which Sir William sent the Indian Joseph Brant.

Kirkland was with Sir William at Johnson Hall from November of 1764 until the following mid-January. Evidently he found much to occupy him as a student of the Indian; and much to learn from Sir William and the countless Indians who came to him as the arbiter of their affairs. Kirkland was then attending Princeton, graduating in 1765. The following year he was ordained at Lebanon and with the full support and cooperation of Sir William entered the missionary field, sponsored by the Scotch Missionary Society. His bravery and discretion won for him an almost absolute control over the Oneidas. His gentle demeanor and his quick sympathy endeared him to the Indians to whom he had dedicated his life.

Perhaps the most noted of his converted brothers was Chief Skenandoa, who, under Kirkland's tutelage and guidance, became an eloquent power for peace. Chief Skenandoa died at Oneida Castle March 11th, 1816, at the remarkable age of 110 years. A simple character, strong in his faith, honest and direct in his dealings, his life is a remarkable tribute to his mentor, Kirkland.

But to return to Kirkland, to whom the Valley owes an immeasurable debt of gratitude. His influence over the Oneidas was strong enough to nullify a concerted appeal which the Johnsons, the Butlers, the Mohawks, and every other tribe of the Six Nations made to them to join the English. To Kirkland's per-

sonal influence must be given the credit for holding their friendship throughout the war.

In 1769 Reverend Kirkland married Jerusha Bingham, a niece of Dr. Wheelock, founder of Dartmouth College, who joined him in the field. Their journey from Connecticut was made partly by boat and partly on horseback, the bride riding on a pillion behind her husband. She returned to Stockbridge with their children when the war loomed so ominously.

In 1774 Sir William Johnson died at his home, Johnson Hall, and Guy Johnson succeeded him as Secretary of Indian Affairs. Reverend Kirkland now had a new and powerful influence to combat. Guy Johnson planted the seeds of deceit and discontent among the Indians in an effort to destroy Kirkland's hold upon them. The war was fast approaching.

In 1775 the Continental Congress directed Kirkland to use every influence, not only among the Oneidas but with every tribe of the Six Nations, in an effort to hold them, not necessarily as allies, but as non-combatants in the coming struggle. In this he failed, for while his influence was great among those who knew him best, his work had been largely among the Oneidas. The Mohawks, firm allies of the Johnsons, as well as the Johnsons themselves, the Butlers and others of the Johnson associates, swung the balance of power among the Indians to the English. In June of that year Kirkland appeared at Schenectady in company with five Oneida Indians and appealed to the Schenectady Committee of Safety for some of their members to accompany them to Albany, whither they were bound to discuss their relations with the Colonists. This was granted and on their return they were entertained and given presents before returning to their home.

Following the Clinton-Sullivan Expedition into the Indian country in 1779, it became necessary for the entire Oneida tribe to abandon their village for the shelter of Fort Schuyler at Rome to escape the vengeance of those Indians whose fields and villages had been destroyed by Clinton and Sullivan. These Indians, allies of the English, destroyed the abandoned Oneida village and surrounding crops and when it became apparent the Oneidas could not return in safety to their country, being so completely outnumbered, they were moved in a body to Schenectady, where

they remained until the end of the war, supported by the Government. Their total number was four hundred and six, over half of whom were children.

During the war Reverend Kirkland served as an Army Chaplain at Fort Schuyler (Rome), and afterward rendered valuable aid in the adjudication of Indian affairs, going as far as Philadelphia in company with a body of Chiefs. Here in conference they met Washington and many other leaders.

In 1788 he received from the Indians, with the approval of the State of New York, a valuable tract of land in what is now Kirkland Township, where he took up his residence with his family.

Still interested in the welfare of the Indians, he made repeated attempts to establish a school system among them, and in 1793, with the aid of such men as Baron Steuben, Colonel North, Major Williams, and Stephen Van Rensselaer, the Hamilton Oneida Academy was formed. Baron Steuben laid the cornerstone.

Reverend Kirkland built his house in 1795, its original location being on the south side of the road at the foot of the College Hill. It was moved to its present location by Elihu Root, an alumnus of the College. The school struggled through a long and difficult period, leading to the founding of Hamilton College in 1812, too late unfortunately to serve the Oneidas, who had been uppermost in Reverend Kirkland's mind, for they had been moved to their "Reservation." These great accomplishments the Reverend Kirkland did not live to see, for he died on College Hill February 28th, 1808, after spending the last years of his life blind and crippled.

Chief Skenandoa had begged to be buried beside "his brother (Kirkland) that he might at the resurrection lay hold of his skirts." His prayer was answered. His remains lie close by those of the Reverend Kirkland on College Hill. His own words are his epitaph:

*"I am an aged hemlock;
The winds of a hundred Winters
Have whistled through my branches;
I am dead at the top.
The generation to which I belonged
Have run away and left me."*

Powder Horn of Lieut. & Adjutant. CHRISTOPHER HUTTON. III REGT. THE LINE, Commanded by Col. Peter Gansevoort, who was Commandant at Fort Schuyler (Stamw.) during the siege in Aug. 1777. In addition to others mentioned "CHRIST HUTTON - 1777 - FORT SCHUYLER - III REGT. - THE LINE is prominently featured, clearly representing the STRIPES & STRIPES. Lieut. Hutton without doubt was present with his regiment during the period of their service at Fort Schuyler - Apr. 1777 to Nov. 1778. It is very possible to believe the horn was carved during this service, and that the flag engraved thereon represents the flag made and raised over Fort Schuyler during the siege. The only question is - Was the horn engraved elsewhere at a later date. However, so far as has been learned, Lieut. Hutton was never again in that vicinity during the Revolutionary War, but was constantly in other sections of the country. The officer on the horse undoubtedly represents Col. Peter Gansevoort.



- Same as -

Museum of Montgomery County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1000, New York, N.Y.

FORT STANWIX — FORT SCHUYLER



AS EARLY as 1736 traders from up and down the Mohawk Valley petitioned for a fort at the mile-long carry at what is now Rome. This was a danger point, perhaps the most dangerous along the entire water route from Schenectady to the Great Lakes, as the traders were almost helpless if surprised by an attack while engaged in getting their boats and cargoes from the Mohawk to Wood Creek. These men did not travel in large groups or "expeditions" for the reason that trading could not be satisfactorily carried on in that manner.

Fort Williams, built in 1746, on the north bank of the Mohawk, was the answer to the petition for this fort. Fort Bull was built at the other end of the carry on the bank of Wood Creek, where the westbound boats were again launched. The less important Fort Craven was built half way between the terminal forts.

In 1756 the English abandoned and destroyed Fort Williams, and Fort Stanwix succeeded it. The site of the latter is now the center of Rome's business district. It was constructed in 1758, the most important and costly structure in the western end of the Valley, the amount expended being in excess of £60,000. Its name honored its builder, General John Stanwix of the British Army.

Fort Stanwix was dismantled and allowed to go to ruin following the close of the French and Indian war, and this was its condition at the outbreak of the Revolution. In 1776 it was restored by Colonel Elias Dayton under orders from General Washington, and was given the name Fort Schuyler as a token of esteem for General Philip Schuyler of Albany. Colonel Gansevoort was placed in command, and it was he who defended the place against the formidable army of St. Leger, Sir John Johnson and Colonel Butler with their 1750 men, many of whom were Indians. The action at the fort dovetails with the Battle of Oriskany, where the greatest fighting occurred.

Considerable confusion has arisen over the two names Fort Stanwix and Fort Schuyler. Perhaps it is better known as Fort

← *Carved Powder Horn showing Fort Stanwix*

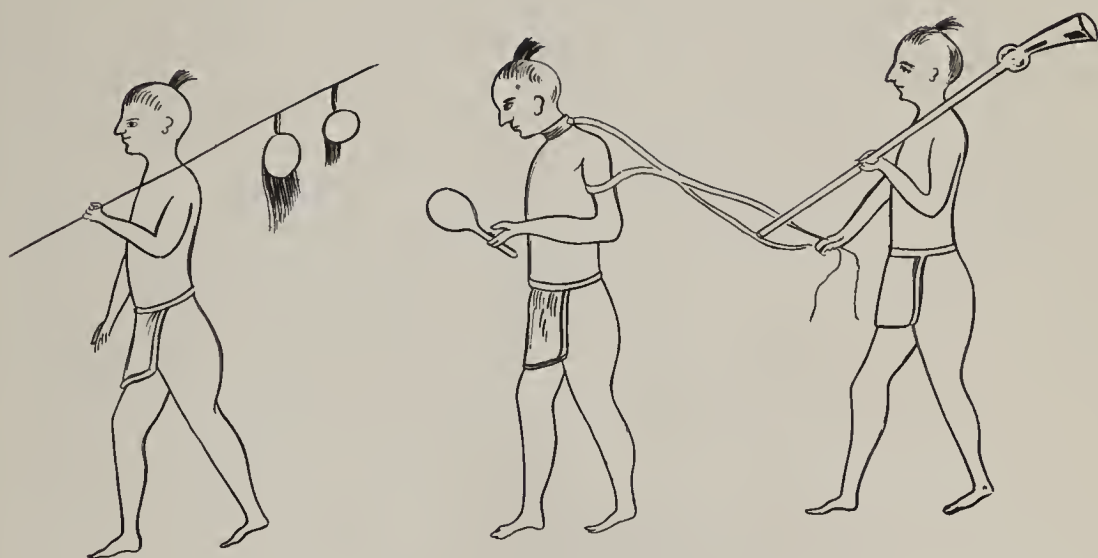
Stanwix, as this was its original name. One often hears that the "Stars and Stripes were first flown at Fort Stanwix." The confusion is heightened by the fact that there was another Fort Schuyler at what is now Utica.

After the Revolution Fort Stanwix (Schuyler) was again allowed to fall into ruin by flood and fire in 1781, and finally when its earthen outworks were leveled off the last tangible evidence of its presence was forever lost.

No doubt the reason for the complete disappearance of this fort is that it was built of wood, reinforced with earthen parapets, no stone being used. Its loss is lamentable, for while there were other forts constructed somewhat similar to this one, Fort Stanwix (Schuyler) was the most important and the most pretentious of them all, and of all so built not a vestige of any of them remains. Nor have any of them been reconstructed for the benefit of thousands upon thousands of students of history, tourists and school children whose interest in these battlegrounds and their buildings increase in an astonishing ratio with the passage of the years.

Many important Indian treaties were consummated here. One which Sir William Johnson negotiated with an assemblage of 3200 Indians was the treaty of 1768. By another treaty in 1784, between the Indians and the United States, a western boundary for the Six Nations was fixed. At this treaty Red Jacket, the famous Seneca Chief, made a fiery speech in which he declared the Indians should not cede any of their lands. In 1788 came the treaty between New York State and the Six Nations which threw open to settlement a vast area of western New York. Governor Clinton and General Lafayette were present at this conference.

Of greater interest, however, than any conference held here is the historic fact that the newly adopted American flag, the Stars and Stripes, was for the first time hoisted as the National Emblem over the ramparts of Fort Stanwix (Schuyler) on August 3rd, 1777.





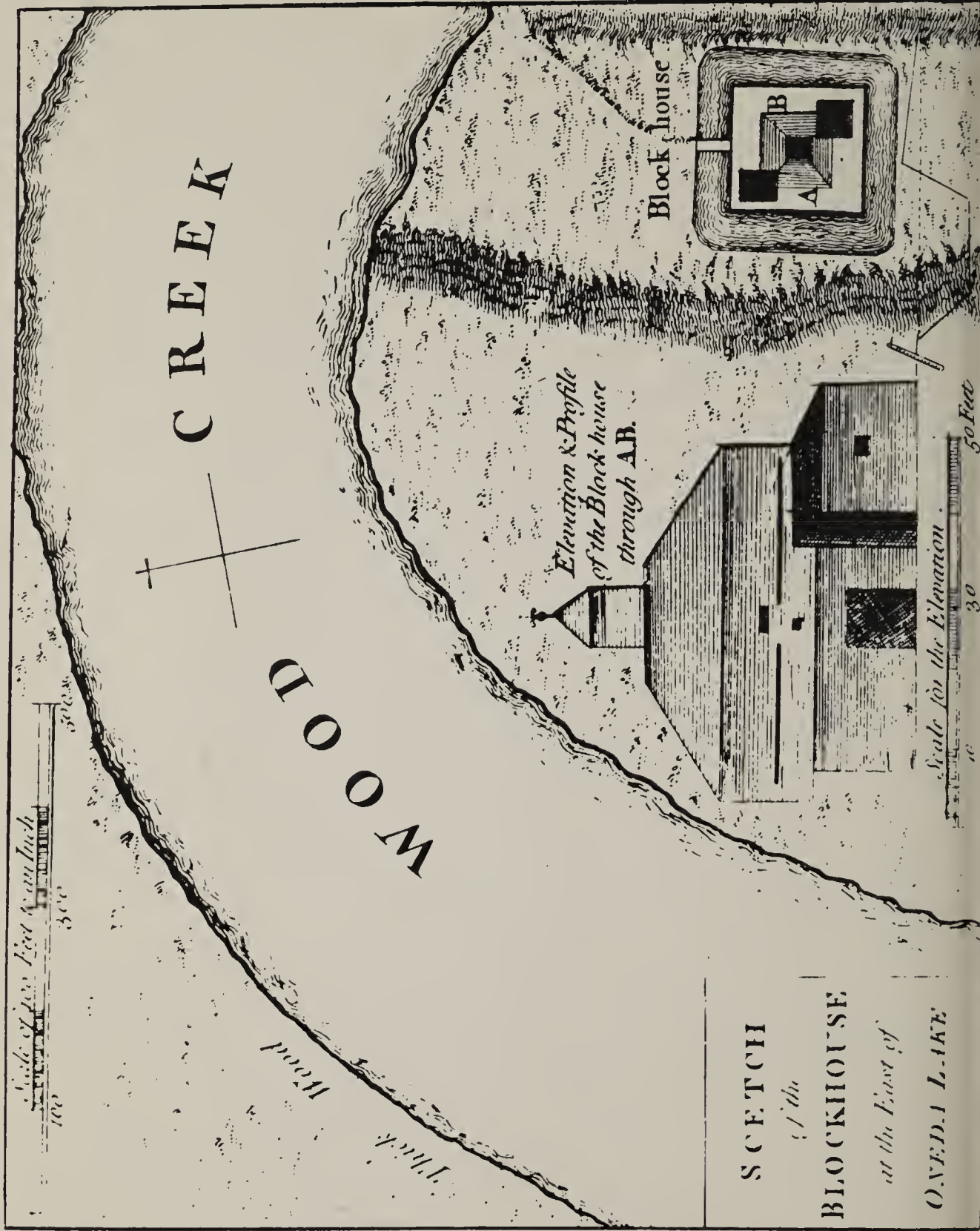
FORT BULL, FORT WILLIAMS AND THE ROYAL BLOCKHOUSE



THESE structures near Rome were links in a chain of fortifications along the natural trans-state waterway. In 1756 but two forts protected the carry. Fort Williams, built in 1746, stood a few blocks from the business center of Rome, near the bank of the Mohawk at the eastern end of the carry, and Fort Bull was at the western end on Wood Creek. Fort Bull was a star-shaped enclosure of pickets fifteen feet high, with a double row inside rising six feet above ground. It carried no cannon.

The following is a French account of the destruction of this fort, taken from the Paris Documents:

"The detachment having commenced their march along the highroad (trail) the soldiers having their bayonets fixed, M. DeLery gave orders to move straight forward without firing a shot and seize the guard on entering the fort. He was still five acres off when he heard the whoop of the Indians, notwithstanding the prohibition he had issued. He instantly ordered an advance, double quick time, in order to carry the gate of the fort, but the enemy had time to close it. Six Indians only, followed the French, the others pursued six Englishmen, who unable to reach the fort, threw themselves into the bush. M. DeLery sent some to cut down the gate and caused the commandant and all his garrison, to surrender, promising quarter to him and all his garrison, to which he only answered by a fire of musketry and by throwing a quantity of grenades. Our soldiers and the Canadians, who ran full speed, the moment the Indians whooped, got possession of the port-holes; through these they fired on such of the English as they could get a sight of. Great efforts were made to batter down the gate, which was finally cut to pieces in about an hour. Then the whole detachment, with a cry, 'Vive le Roi' rushed into the fort and put everyone to the sword they



SKETCH
 of the
 BLOCKHOUSE
 at the East of
 ONVEDA LAKE

could lay hands on. One woman and a few soldiers were fortunate enough to escape the fury of our troops. Some pretend that only one prisoner was made during this action."

The magazine was blown up, the fort was set on fire and totally destroyed. The loss must have been a severe one to the English from the DeLery report which lists as destroyed:

"40 thousand weight of powder, a number of bombs, grenades and balls of different calibre. A great deal of salted provisions, bread, butter, chocolate, sugar and other provisions were likewise thrown into the water. The stores were filled with clothes and other effects which were pillaged; the remainder burned. The day cost the English 90 men of whom 30 were prisoners. Our detachment killed or captured 30 horses."

An effort to relieve Fort Bull had been made by Captain Williams with troops from Fort Williams, but unfortunately this rescue party fell into an Indian ambush in which many were killed, the survivors being driven back to their base. This engagement took place on March 26, 1756. The French, following their success, now withdrew, fearing the arrival of Sir William Johnson with reinforcements.

Fort Williams which never figured in an important action, was destroyed and abandoned by the English in July of this same year when its commander learned of the capture of Chouegen (Oswego).

The Royal Blockhouse was not yet built. It was constructed at the same time as Fort Stanwix (1758), when this latter fort replaced Fort Williams. The blockhouse was merely an outpost maintained by a garrison of fifteen men located beside Wood Creek near its confluence with Oneida Lake. In order to avoid a difficult passage through the troublesome Wood Creek which was both narrow and shallow, a military road was cut through the forest and it was over this road that General Amherst passed in 1760.

The earthworks which surrounded Fort Bull are still visible and are all that remain of this group of important fortifications.



THE SCRIBA MANSION

CONSTANTIA

THIS building does not come strictly within the period under consideration, but because of its interesting history and as an example of what occurred immediately following the close of the Revolution, it is included.

In the latter part of 1791 John and Nicholas J. Roosevelt, New York City merchants, purchased from the State some 500,000 acres of land at thirty-nine cents per acre. The tract included practically all of Oswego County (as now existing) west of the Oswego River as well as a part of the present Oneida County.

George Frederick William Augustus Scriba, born in 1752 in Germany, and later a Holland banker, emigrated to this country and became a wealthy New York City merchant, credited with a fortune of one and a half million dollars. He became interested in the speculation offered in "wild lands" and on December 12, 1794, took over the entire Roosevelt tract. The original patent papers issued to the Roosevelts and signed by Governor Clinton are still in the house. At one time Scriba owned approximately a million acres of land extending from Oneida Lake to Lake Ontario. Scriba then bought and sold other large tracts. One of his early purchasers was Alexander Hamilton, who bought land now largely in the town of Richland, Oneida County.

About 1796 Scriba founded New Rotterdam, as he called it, which is now known as Constantia, and built the "mansion" which still stands overlooking Oneida Lake. It has remained in the family and is occupied by one who bears the Scriba name. Frederick W. Scriba built the village church, now flanked by its interesting cemetery.

The census of 1790 shows but one family by the name of "Scriba" and this one is listed under the "East Ward, New York City. George Scriba, 3 males, 5 females, 0 slaves." This was of course our George Frederick William Augustus, who did not leave New York until six years after this census was taken.

Scriba planned to develop his land by building two towns to be known as "Rotterdam," after his home town in Holland, and "Vera Cruz," the latter at the mouth of Little Salmon Creek. He laid out roads to the towns and did a great deal to encourage settlement. Near his house at Rotterdam (Constantia) he built a store which was remarkably well stocked with \$10,000 in merchandise and here he did a big business, trade coming from forty miles around. Here was brandy at four shillings a quart and flour at six pence a pound. One could secure board at the tavern "for sixteen shillings per week without liquor." Scriba owned his own line of ships and did his own importing and exporting.

His home was this frame building two stories high with long sloping roof. It faces south overlooking the lake. From this location its owner could watch the arrival of prospective land buyers as they came up the lake in their Durham boats to investigate his property. John Meyer, Scriba's agent, sold land for \$3.00 an acre in 1805 which eighteen months earlier he had sold for \$1.00. Here at Rotterdam was the western-most postoffice of the entire North Country for several years.

Pioneers who had made the long tedious journey of 120 miles from Albany to Rome via the Mohawk River and thence on westward told tall tales about the wild lands belonging to Scriba along Oneida Lake and on out toward Oswego.

The home this land baron built is suggestive of an early Mohawk Valley dwelling. Entering its front door, then adorned on either side by lanterns, one sees a beautifully proportioned hall which exactly divides the house. This hall terminates in another at right angles, toward the rear, leaving two large rooms at the front of the house and three smaller rooms across the back.

In the living room is a splendid old fireplace with flanking built-in cupboards and above all a mantel. All this woodwork is hand carved; the stairs are of cherry and the hand rail of mahogany.

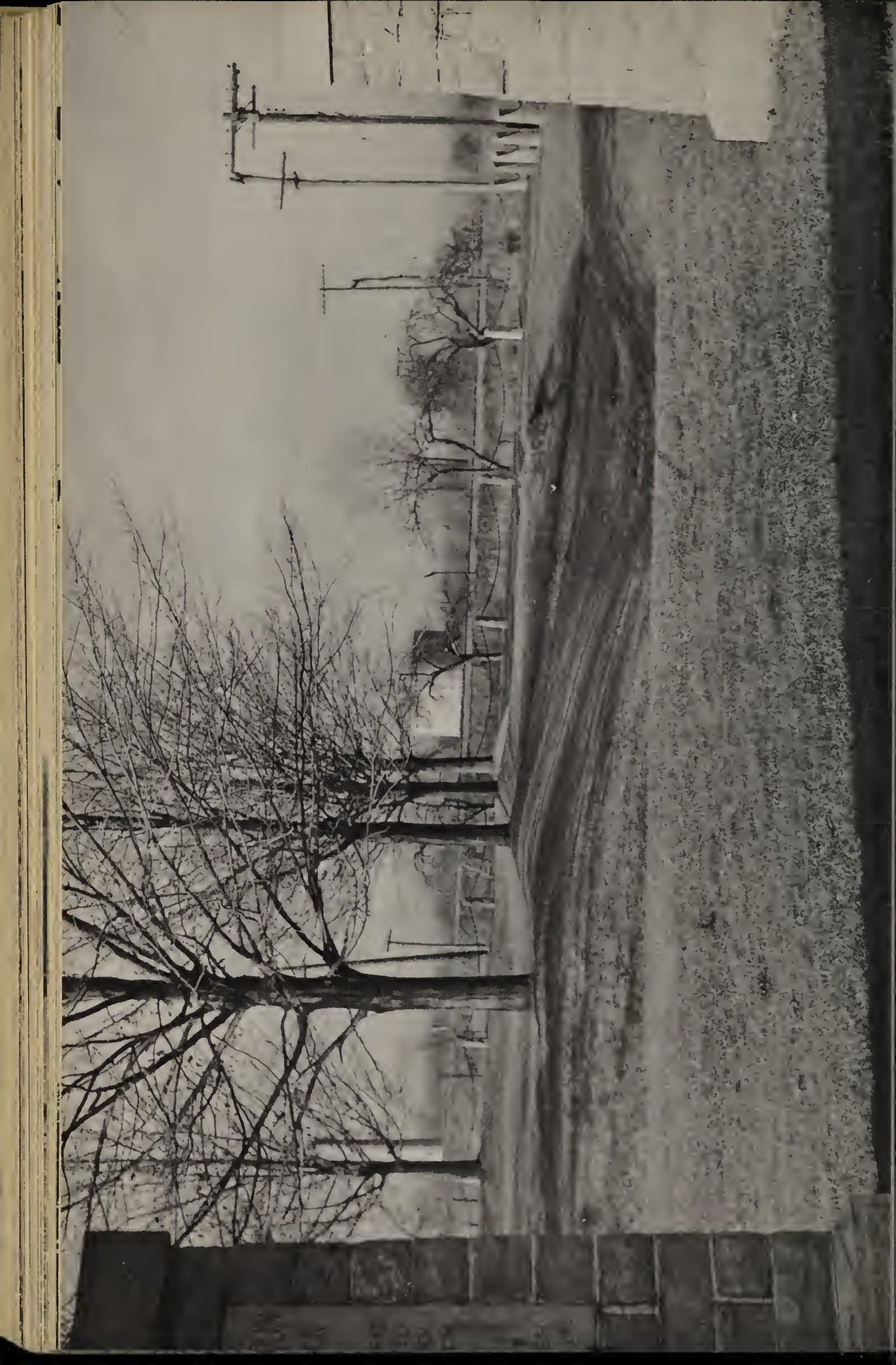
The main part of the house is but forty-five feet square, with a shed recently attached at the rear in such a way as to continue in an unbroken pitch the roof line of the main house. This gives the building, as viewed from the side, a most unusual appearance. There is a basement under the north half of the house where the

ground naturally falls off toward Frederick Creek. No pretense toward elegance or adornment is discernible in the exterior of the house. Indeed, it would be difficult to conceive how it could be more severely plain. The house, being frame, has of necessity undergone repair. The siding is new, as well as the windows. The front door is the original and is easily recognized as such.

Within the rooms are many heirlooms. A grandfather's clock made in Reading, England, stands nine feet six inches under the ten foot ceiling. Its honest old face indicates the day of the month and the change of the moon.


The house also holds a rich heritage of pewter, Sheffield and silverware, with a great many pieces of antique furniture such as tables, chairs, beds and lesser pieces. All of these were once the property of George William Augustus Scriba. Yet his extensive improvements, such as his building of roads, his clearing of land necessary to the laying out of his projected towns, together with his other expenditures promoting colonization, proved far too costly, and he died August 14, 1836, a comparatively poor man.





FORT BREWERTON

BREWERTON

HE visible remains of Fort Brewerton are the irregular embankments which enclosed the fort. These have been sodded, and trees planted to protect them from erosion. The eight salient angles of the fort are easily seen. Within this enclosure is the old well which furnished the garrison with water. In 1906 the State of New York bought the site and enclosed it within a simple fence and made it a State Reservation to preserve it for all time.

The fort was built in 1755, the location being chosen by General Abercrombie, the English commander, as a point of defense along the all-important water route and trail between the Great Lakes and Albany. From its location all travel up and down the Oneida River was under observation. It was named for Captain Brewerton of the English Army. The site is a sloping plain on the northerly bank some 300 feet from the river's edge, about a mile west of the lake which is the river's source. It is about 350 feet across the embankment. Formerly a moat surrounded it and the earthworks inside were surmounted by loopholed palisades 20 feet high. An underground powder magazine about 100 feet east of the fort was connected with it by a tunnel.

Within the palisades were blockhouses hewn from heavy logs and large enough to accommodate a garrison of a hundred men. A covered gateway in the south wall of the fort opened toward the river. The armament was four swivel-mounted three-pounders.

The Onondaga Indians had selected this site for a village, as mentioned by the French explorer Le Moyne in 1654. It was a junction point on two of their important trails. Furthermore it had always been a favored fishing place. The run of fish in and out of Oneida Lake in those early days was unbelievably large. At such times the Indians placed their weirs in the shallow waters of the outlet and caught these fish in immense quantities.

There was an Indian burial ground on what is called Iroquois

Island just east of the fort, for the bones of hundreds of human beings were unearthed there during recent grading operations. In addition to the Indian burials other relics have been found in abundance at scattered nearby points.

From what is known of Champlain's route of exploration, it is assumed that he passed through here in 1615, probably the first white man to see the place. It is said La Salle dated and dispatched a letter from here in 1673 and that Frontenac was here in 1692. Other French explorers mention the existence of an Indian village here as early as 1654.

It will be noted that this fort was built the same year as Fort Bull, which was at the eastern end of Wood Creek, and Fort Williams on the Mohawk near Rome. All were built to reinforce the Oswego trail, the only line of communication with the outpost at Oswego (built in 1727) and the Mohawk River settlements.

Following the Indian treaties, Fort Brewerton was dismantled and subsequently occupied as a trading post. Sir William Johnson spent three weeks here in October of 1767 by which time the fort had been dismantled. The razing was in accordance with the treaty that the territory was to revert to the Indians. In connection with its latter days as a garrisoned fort, the following document, found in the attic of old Fort Klock, is of interest:

"permit the bearer hereof, James Platto with one batteau and three men, to pass from this to Schenectady and Return with Liquor and stores for the use of the garrison, he behaving as Becometh.

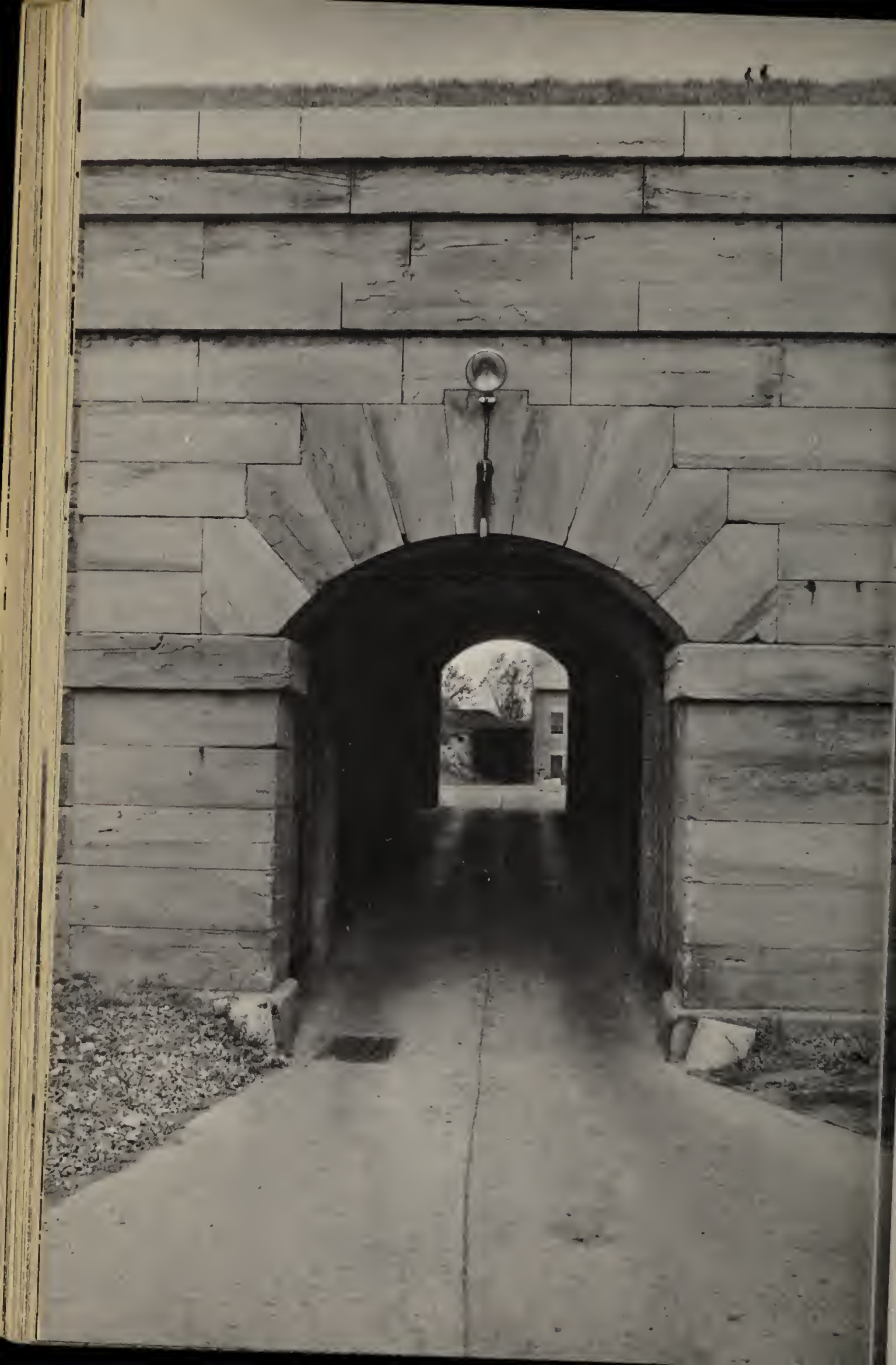
Given under my hand this 27th day of August 1763 at Fort Brewerton. To all whom concerned—

(Signed) Hy Congalton, Lieut.
60th Reg —
Commanding Fort Brewerton."





OSWEGO IN 1755.



FORTS OSWEGO AND ONTARIO

EVIDENCE of the necessity of a fort or trading post at Oswego is found in a letter written by Governor Burnett at New York, dated June 25th, 1723, to the Lords of Trade at London, in which he said in part:

"Last spring there came about twenty Far Indians to Albany and this month about eighty, besides women and children which they commonly bring with them wherever they go. . . . I have since, intelligence of forty or fifty more Far Indians who are coming to Albany to trade . . . and thus I find the fruits of the Company I have kept in the Sinekees country, whose business it has been to persuade all the Indians that pass by, to come rather to trade at Albany than Montreal. . . .

I shall be very earnest to build a Fort in the Indian Country which I believe will be the best way to secure the passage of these remote Indians from any interruptions. . . ."

From his letter we can appreciate the importance of this trade to the colony. Both England and France were "on their toes" to secure control of the waterways which were the only passages to and from the country of the "Far Indians."

Again, at New York on December 4th, 1726, Governor Burnett writes the Duke of New Castle:

"I am now to lay before your Grace a complaint in which the Indians of the six nations join with me against the French for having built a fort at Niagara on the land of one of the six nations at the place through which they must pass to go to their own hunting country. . . . By means of this fort the French can hinder and molest these Indians when they please, which is directly contrary to the 15th Art: of the Treaty of Utrecht. . . .

I have likewise prevailed with the Assembly to raise 300 pounds in their last sessions in order to enable me to build a fort at the mouth of the Onondaga River, on the

side of the lake, in the spring, in order to protect our trade. . . . ”

The situation became more critical. Governor Burnett won his point and arranged for the building of a “stone house” as related in his letter to the Lords of Trade at London under date of May 9th, 1727, as follows:

“ . . . I have this Spring sent up workmen to build a stone house of strength at a place called Oswego, at the mouth of the Onondaga River where our principal trade with the Far Nations is carried on. I have obtained the consent of the Six Nations to build it . . . and . . . sent up a detachment of sixty soldiers and a Captain and two Lieutenants to protect the building from any disturbance that any French and Indians may offer to it. There are besides, about two hundred traders now at the same place . . . I have been obliged to lay out more than double that value (300) pounds upon my own credit to furnish necessities and provisions, and hire workmen, and make Battoes to carry up the men, for it is all water carriage (travel) from our outmost town called Schenectady, to this place, which is about two hundred miles, except five miles, where they must draw their Battoes over land, which is easily enough done (?) and this makes the communication much more convenient than by land. . . . ”

The letter is interesting in its casual description of means of reaching Oswego. No doubt it was “easily enough done” as compared with an attempt to move this enormous amount of supplies overland through an unbroken forest. But nevertheless it does smack of the man behind the desk who, without experience, tells how it can be done. It is also interesting in its statement that there are “about two hundred traders now at the same place,” which was further proof of the need of a fort or fortified trading post. Certainly these two hundred traders would not have been there had they not known of plans for the building of the fort.

How quickly the French responded to the erection of the fort is seen in Governor Burnett’s letter to the Duke of New Castle, dated August 24th, 1727, saying:

"I have now finished the strong house at Oswego . . . but have lately received a summons from the Governor of Canada to demolish and abandon it in fifteen days . . . to which I could by no means agree. . . ."

Rather an imperative note to say the least, and not much time allowed to think it over!

During the interval from 1727 to 1749 the fort was garrisoned and some slight attempts made to better its defenses. Governor Clark, writing to London from New York in 1743, expresses concern over the activities of the French "on the Lake Cada-raqui" (Ontario) saying:

"On the Northeast end whereof near the entrance into the River of St. Lawrence they have a small stone fort called Frontenac (Kingston) . . . and on the Southwest end near the fall of Niagara another . . . We have a trading house and a garrison of 20 men in it at Oswego, almost opposite to Fort Frontenac. . . ."

No fort had yet been built on the east side of the Oswego River and the garrison was inadequate at Oswego. On September 23rd, 1749, Lieutenant Lindesay, in command at Oswego, writes Governor Clinton explaining the care with which he has promoted trade with the Indians and sends a very comprehensive table showing the amount of trade carried on. He also says:

"I have, daily, opportunities to see what pains the French take to gain our Five Nations many ways and they seem to be in too good a way to succeed if the assembly do not enable your excellency to Empower Col. Johnson to take proper means to keep those we have on our side and gain over some other trading Indians. . . ."

Evidently the pressure from business men and traders was making itself felt for on April 23rd, 1755, the Governor announced to the "Board" (The New York Assembly) the fact that "The Fort at Oswego, as a Post of Great Importance is to be strengthened." This is what was done:

"They began a new fort upon a hill on the east side of the river about 470 yards from the old one. It is 800 feet in circumference and will command the harbor; it is built of logs from 20 to 30 inches thick, the wall is 14 feet high and is encompassed by a ditch 14 feet broad and ten

deep. It is to contain barracks for 300 men and to mount 16 guns. On the other side of the river west from the old fort another new fort is erecting. This is 170 feet square, besides the parapet; this is also encompassed with a ditch 14 feet broad and 10 feet deep and is to contain barracks for 200 men; another barracks is preparing of 150 feet by 24."

The fort east of the river was the beginning of Fort Ontario, now the property of New York State.

On February 2nd, 1756, Governor Vaudreuil of Canada writes to the Minister at Paris:

"Chouaguen (Oswego) is now in a state of defense . . . The English have three forts there, each of which has cannon and bombs. The garrison consists of 600 men who are constantly on the alert."

On the 14th of August, 1756, the Marquis de Montcalm, who succeeded Baron Dieskau in command of the French troops in Canada, crossed Lake Ontario from Fort Frontenac with a force of 3000 to 4000 troops and a large number of Indians, and captured and completely destroyed the entire post, leaving only smoking ruins. He seized a vast store of armament and ammunition, thousands of barrels of provisions, the military chest and a "quantity of liquors and wines." Speaking of his Indian allies Montcalm says "the latter perpetrated there a multitude of horrors and assassinated more than 100 persons . . ." The letter of Governor Hardy of September 5th to the Lords of Trade tells the story:

"The enemy attacked Fort Ontario with musquetry which they continued for two days, when the English garrison abandoned it . . . and retired into the Old Fort, soon after the enemy drew up their cannon to Fort Ontario . . . and commanded the Old Fort . . . the surrender took place and the French possessed the fort."

Inasmuch as Oswego represented the westernmost of the English trading posts to which the majority of these venture-some "boslopers" (forest runners) made their way, here seems a logical place in the narrative to give a description of the route by which they came and went. The two following are valuable

in that they are "of the time" of which we write.

The first is from the diary of Ralph Izard who was "born in Charleston S. C. in 1742, and inherited a large estate; educated in England, he returned to America and married a niece of Lt. Gov. DeLancey. His journey to Niagara was evidently made before his marriage. He was a loyal patriot and esteemed friend of Washington; was U. S. Senator from South Carolina and a delegate to Congress, 1789-1795."

"Monday 24th June 1765 — Went with my three companions aboard a sloop for Albany (from New York City) a very hot day with the wind at south after sailing about fifty miles through a very rocky and mountainous country, the wind came about contrary and we anchored.

Friday 28th — arrived at Albany, a hundred and sixty miles from New York. Albany is a dirty, ill-built Dutch town, of about three hundred houses; stands upon Hudson's River. Dined at Schuylers.

July 2nd — Left Albany in a wagon, came to Schenectady, Laid at Sir William Johnsons; he is superintendent for Indian affairs in the northern district. Breakfasted at Fort Johnson (Amsterdam) where Sir William's son lives, eighteen miles from Schenectady; good land all the way thither. Dined with Sir William at Johnson Hall. Extraordinary good land about his house. The office of Superintendent was very troublesome. Sir William continually plagued with Indians about him, generally from 300 to 900 in number — spoil his garden and keep his house always dirty.

7th — Left Sir William's, lay at Nicholas Failing's, a very civil Dutchman who seemed glad to give us whatever he had in his house; it is 42 miles from Schenectady.

8th — Got to Nicholas Herkimer's, 16 miles from Failings.

9th — Fort Herkimer, 8 miles. The land about it belongs to old Herkimer, excellent land settled by Germans. During the war this fort was built for the protection of the neighborhood from the attacks of the Six Nations Indians, who live round about it.

10th — Discharged our wagon; went on board a bat-

teaux; hunted and rowed up the Mohawk River against the stream which, on account of the rapidity of the current, is very hard work for the poor soldiers. Encamped on the banks of the River about 9 miles from Herkimers.

Friday 11th — Got to Fort Schuyler, (Utica) 15 miles from our last night's encampment. A little block house, built during the late war, not capable of containing above six or eight people.

Saturday 12th — Had a disagreeable ride, 22 miles through a thick wood with a bad path to Fort Stanwix (Rome) built in the year 1759 by Gen. Stanwix. Lieut. Allan Grant commanded there.

Monday 14th — Went on horseback by the side of Wood Creek 20 miles to the Royal blockhouse, a kind of wooden castle, proof against any Indian attacks. It is now abandoned by the troops and a settler lives there, who keeps rum, milk, and racoons, which though nothing of the most elegant, is comfortable to the strangers passing that way. This blockhouse is situated at the east end of Oneida Lake, and is surrounded by the Oneida, one of the Six Nations. Some of our batteaux not being come up, we stayed next day at the blockhouse.

16th — Embarked and rowed to the west end of the lake which is 28 miles, to Fort Brewington, a small stockade, built last war. The Oneida Lake is 20 miles broad from north to south.

17th — Rowed down the Oswego River to the Onondaga Falls, 39 miles. These falls are so rapid, that the batteaux were all drawn out of the water, and rolled 20 yards upon logs made for this purpose, below the falls where we encamped.

18th — Arrived at Fort Ontario (commanded by Capt. Lieut. Jonathan Rogers of the Seventeenth) situated on the Lake of that name, near a point formed by the lake and Oswego River. Fort Ontario is of wood, has five bastions built in 1759. Fort Oswego which was taken by the French, is on the opposite side of the River within sight of this Fort. Pontiac, the famous Ottawa chief with 60 head men of the neighboring Indians, were

arrived here to meet Sir William Johnson about matters of consequence.

21st — Sir William arrived.

22nd — At two o'clock in the morning left Fort Ontario, encamped on the banks of Lake Ontario about 30 miles from the Fort.

23rd — Proceeded and encamped.

24th — Arrived late in the evening at Niagara Fort, one hundred and seventy miles from Fort Ontario, Captain Thomas Norris of the Seventeenth regiment commanded here. Many civilities received from him and the officers of the regiment."

Then follows an account of a visit to Niagara Falls and the return to New York via Quebec and Lake Champlain.

Having made the trip westward en route to Niagara, a description is now given of the route, as written by a French spy going eastward from Oswego back through the Valley in 1757. However the date is eight years earlier than that of the previous account:

"Itinerary from the mouth of the River Chouegen (Oswego) in Lake Ontario to Lake Oneida then up Vilcrick (Wood Creek) to the summit level which is the source of the River of the Mohawk, or des Agnies, by which we can descend to Corlaer or Chenectedi (Schenectady) when Albany or Orange can be reached.

The entrance to the River Chouegen (Oswego) is easy, the harbor is formed of a cove. The English had a fort on each side of this River by which this entrance was defended.

From Chouegen (Oswego) to the Great Fall is an ascent of four leagues. In this space the navigation is intricate, the river rapid and encumbered with large rocks. Good pilots familiar with the shoals, are requisite to be able to pass through it. Batteaux must be unloaded at the Great Fall where a portage occurs of about 40 to 50 paces. The batteaux are dragged along the ground. . . .

From Chouegen to Ft. Bull is estimated to be about 36 leagues. The ordinary batteau load is only 14 to 1500 weight. It takes five days to ascend the River from

Chouegen to Ft. Bull and three and a half from Fort Bull to Chouegen (Oswego). The River of the Five Nations (Seneca River) rises in little lakes near which, about six leagues from its entrance into the River Chouegen, the Indians of the Five Nations reside. The River divides into two branches. That from the right rises in the Lake of the Senecas and Cayugas. That from the left beyond the lake of Ononontagues. . . . It is estimated to be about four leagues from the Fall to the mouth of the River of the Five Nations (River Seneca) which mouth is called the Three Rivers."

The junction of the Rivers Oneida and Seneca with the Oswego is still known as the Three Rivers, and the point of land as the Three Rivers Point.

"Lake Oneida is about twelve leagues long by about one league wide. Its navigation is beautiful and practicable at all times unless there be a strong contrary wind. It is best on the right side of the Lake which is the north side. From Lake Oneida we enter River Vilcrick. . . . The River of Killed Fish (now Fish Creek) flows also into the Lake; the English used it formerly; they abandoned it because there was a portage, and they have preferred Vilcrick which they have cleared, which empties into that Lake from where we ascend nine leagues to Fort Bull. This River is full of sinuousities, narrow and sometimes embarrassed with trees fallen from both banks. Its navigation is difficult when the water is low. It is, however, passable at all times with an ordinary batteaux load of from 14 to 1500 weight. When the waters of this stream are low, an ordinary batteau load cannot go by the river, further than within a league of Fort Bull. It becomes necessary then, to unload and make a Carrying place of the remainder by a road constructed to the Fort, or to send back the batteaux for the other half load.

Fort Bull, which was burned in 1756 by a detachment under orders of M. deLery was situated on the right bank of this River, near its source on the height of land. From Fort Bull to Fort Williams it is estimated to be one league and a quarter. This is the Carrying place across the height of land. The English had constructed a road

there over which all the carriages passed. They were obliged to bridge a portion of it, extending from Fort Bull to a small stream near which a Fort had been begun though not finished; it was to be intermediate between the two Forts, having been located precisely on the summit level.

Fort Williams was situated on the right bank of the River Mohawk or des Agnies, near the rise of that River on the height of land. It was abandoned and destroyed by the English after the capture of Chouegen. . . .

From Fort William the Mohawk River is navigable. Batteaux carry the same load as in the River Vilcrick to the portage at the Little Falls, which is about two leagues below the village of the Palatines and Fort Kouari. . . . Fort Kouari is situated on the right side of the Mohawk River on a small hill on the edge of that River's bank. . . . From Fort Kouari to that of Cannatchocary (Canajoharie) is four leagues. Some twenty houses are located at a distance, one from another, within the space of one league of this road. . . .

Fort Cannatchocary is situated on the side of the Mohawk River on the right bank. . . .

From Fort Cannatchocary to Fort Hunter is about twelve leagues; the road is pretty good; carriages pass over it. It continues along the bank of the Mohawk River. About a hundred houses at a greater or less distance from one another are found within this length of road. . . .

Fort Hunter is situated on the borders of the Mohawk River and is of the same form as that of Cannatchocary. . . . There is a church or temple in the middle of the Fort. In the interior of the Fort are also some thirty cabins of Mohawk Indians, which is the most considerable village. . . .

From Fort Hunter to Chenectedi or Corlaer is seven leagues. The public carriage way continues along the right bank of the Mohawk River. About twenty or thirty houses are found within this distance. . . . The inhabitants of this section are Dutch. . . .

Chenectedi or Corlaer, situated on the banks of the Mohawk River is a village of about three hundred houses.

It is surrounded by upright pickets flanked from distance to distance. Entering this village by the gate on the Fort Hunter side, there is a fort to the right which forms a species of citidel in the interior of the village itself. It is a square, flanked with four bastions or demi-bastions and is constructed half of masonry and half of timbers piled one over the other above the masonry. It is capable of holding 2 or 300 men. There are some pieces of cannon as a battery on the rampart. It is not encircled by a ditch. The entry is through a large swing gate raised like a drawbridge. By penetrating the village in attacking it at another point, the fire from the fort can be avoided. The greatest portion of the inhabitants of Chenectedi are Dutch.

From Chenectedi to Albany or Orange is estimated to be six or seven leagues. The road is excellent for all sorts of carriages; the soil sandy and the country covered with open timber. There are only a few hills. A league and a half from Chenectedi there is a house on the road which is a tavern. A league and a half further on, that is to say half way, another house is met which is also a tavern. . . .

Leaving Fort William by the left bank of the River Mohawk the Village of the Palatines is estimated to be 12 leagues. . . . The Palatine Village was situated on the left bank of the Mohawk, not directly opposite Fort Kouari but about half of a quarter of a league above it. You go from their Village to the Fort by batteau; the River can even be forded at several places. The Palatine Village which consisted of thirty houses has been entirely destroyed and burned by a detachment under M. deBelletre's orders. The inhabitants of the Village formed a company of 100 men bearing arms. They reckoned three hundred persons, men, women and children, 102 of whom were made prisoners and the remainder fled to Fort Kouari, except a few who were killed whilst fording the River.

From the Palatine Village to Little Falls, still continuing along the left bank of the river, is estimated about three leagues. In this distance there had been eight houses which have been abandoned. . . .

The portage at the Little Falls is a quarter of a league and is passed with carts. There is a road on both sides of the river but that on the left bank is preferable, being better.

From the portage at Little Falls continuing along the left bank of the River, there is only a foot path which is travelled with difficulty on horseback. . . . There is also a ferry boat at this place to put carts across when the river is high. . . .

After fording Canada Creek we continue along the left bank of the Mohawk River and high road which is passable for carts, for 12 leagues to Colonel Johnson's mansion. In the whole of this distance the soil is very good. About 500 houses are erected at a distance, one from another. The greatest number of those on the bank of the river are built of stone. . . . There is not a fort in the whole of this distance of 12 leagues. There is but one farmer's house, built of stone, that is somewhat fortified and surrounded with pickets. It is situated on the bank of the River three leagues from where the Canada Creek empties into the Mohawk River. . . .

Colonel Johnson's mansion is situated on the border of the left bank of the River Mohawk; it is three stories high; built of stone with portholes and a parapet and flanked with four bastions on which are some small guns. In the same yard, on both sides of the mansion there are two small houses; that on the right of the entrance is a store, and that on the left is designed for the workmen, negroes and other domestics. The yard gate is a heavy swing gate well ironed. It is on the Mohawk River side; from this gate to the River there is about two hundred paces of level ground. The high road passes there. A small rivulet coming from the north empties itself into the Mohawk River about 200 paces below the enclosure of the yard. On this stream there is a mill about 50 paces distant from the house; below the mill there is the miller's house where grain and flour are stored, and on the other side of the creek, 100 paces from the mill is a barn in which cattle and fodder are kept. One hundred and fifty paces from Colonel Johnson's mansion, at the north side, on the left bank of the little

creek is a little hill on which is a small house with port-holes where is ordinarily kept a guard of honor of some twenty men, which serves also as an advance post.

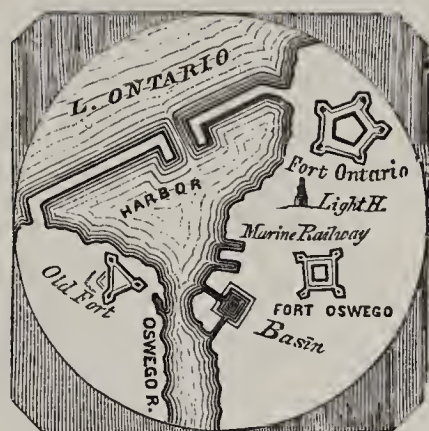
From Colonel Johnson's house to Chenectedi is counted seven leagues; the road is good; all sorts of vehicles pass over it. About twenty houses are found from point to point on this road.

The Mohawk River can be forded during the summer, a league and quarter west of Chenectedi. Opposite Chenectedi the traverse is usually in a ferry boat and batteaux. The inhabitants of this country are Dutchmen. They form a company of about 100 men with those on the opposite side of the River below Fort Hunter.

Going from Chenectedi to the mouth of the Mohawk River, where it discharges into that of Orange (Hudson), there is a great Fall (Cohoes) which prevents the passage of batteaux so that everything on the river going from Chenectedi to Orange passes over the high road that leads there direct. . . . "

Of Fort Oswego (Chouegen) nothing remains. There is a boulder to mark its location at the mouth of the river. Another boulder located on a State Reservation called Montcalm Park, consisting of about two acres in the triangle of Montcalm, Sixth and Schuyler Streets marks the location of a fortified redoubt called Fort George, of which nothing remains. Just one stone can be identified as a part of old Fort Oswego. In the local courthouse, built in 1818, there is a stone under the sill of the window at the northwest corner, in the north wall, which bears the date 1745. It is said that much of the building stone used in the walls of this structure came from the bomb-proof which was at the northwest corner of the enclosure of Fort Oswego.

Fort Ontario, opposite, on the east bank overlooking the harbor and the sites of the former forts, remains in its rebuilt condition. It has been in use as an army post until recent years and is interesting but obviously of a much later date than the Revolutionary period. An old military report with its accompanying sketch located a very early fort at the water's edge just under the bluff below Fort Ontario, but all traces of this structure have disappeared.



FORTS AT OSWEGO.



FORT NIAGARA

YOUNGSTOWN



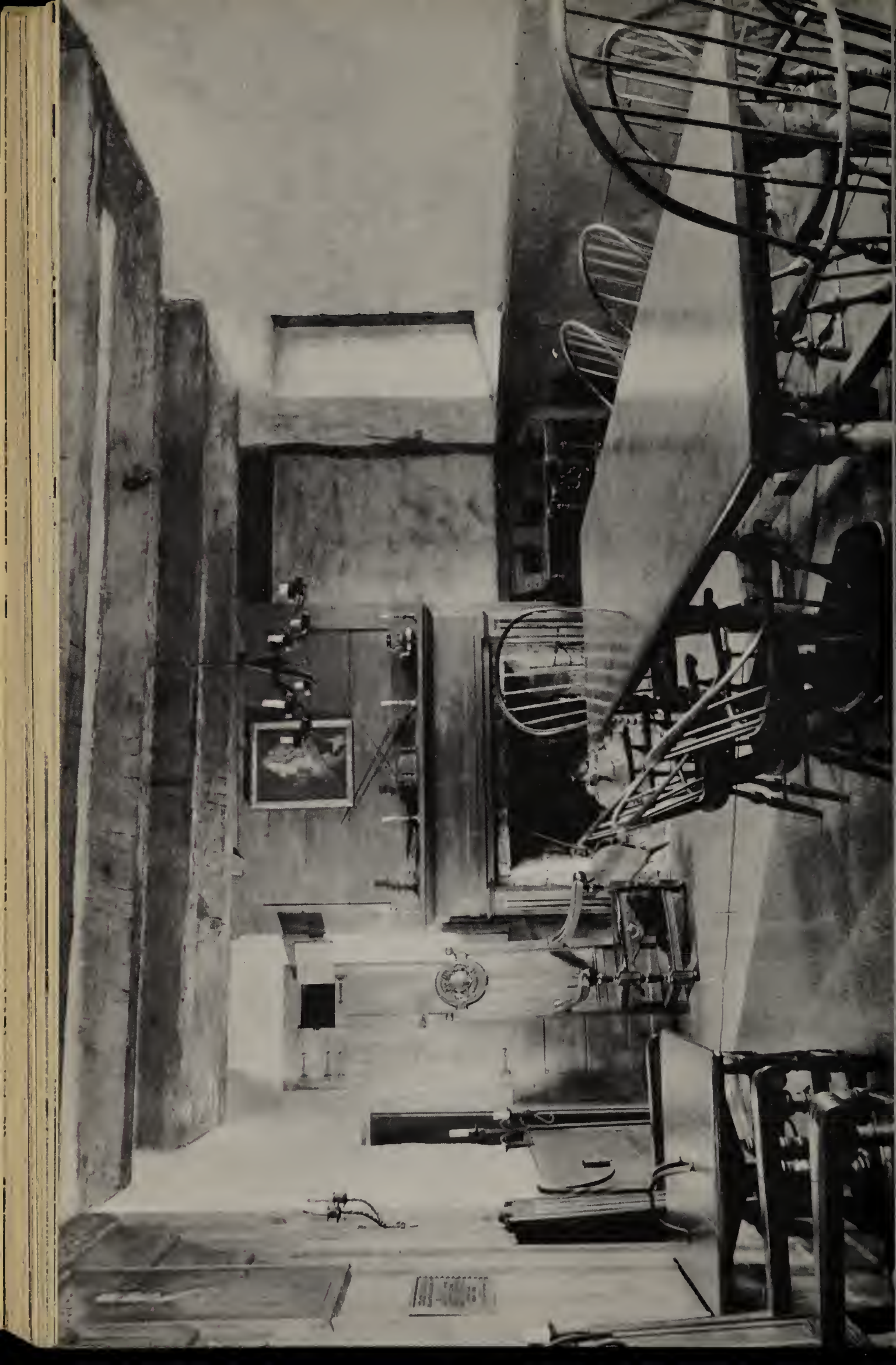
REFERENCE date to the earliest history of this locality takes one back to the earliest French records which have come down to us, for this location was along the route of those hardy French explorers, the first white men known to follow the St. Lawrence water route westward.

Etienne Brusle, one of Champlain's interpreters, left a record of explorations in this neighborhood in 1615 and was perhaps the first to see this spot, for in 1626 Father Joseph de la Roche Dallion, a Franciscan priest, with two companions visited the place described to them by Brusle. Here we have the first written record of a white man's presence.

From this date, 1626, to 1669 little seems to have been accomplished toward effecting a settlement although Father Brebeuf had come and gone in the interval before 1641. The remaining years of this period are devoid of efforts at settlement, due perhaps to the fact that the Iroquois were at war with local tribes whom they eventually conquered.

In 1669 LaSalle, then but 26 years of age, came from Montreal with a company in nine canoes, with permission from the French governor to explore the territory and plant upon it the Bourbon flag. With them, or closely in their wake, came the fur traders, and then arose the need of a permanent trading post. To build such a post required the services of carpenters, blacksmiths and masons so there grew up an embryonic settlement bustling with activity. Ships had to be built to sail these large lakes and negotiate for trade in the limitless wilderness to the westward. The most famous of these was the "Griffon." She sailed away on her maiden voyage in August 1679 into this vast "beyond," yet no trace of her, man or mast, was ever found.

But Niagara remained the pivot from which, for a hundred years, the French spun their web of settlements, extending across Illinois and far down the Mississippi. England watched this progress with growing concern, for the success of her settlements



in New York were likewise wrapped up in the fur trade, the source of which conflicted with the French interests along the Great Lakes.

Thomas Dongan, the English governor, built a fort and trading post at Oswego to contest this tide of French occupation. The French at Niagara, learning what had been accomplished, remonstrated and at the same time proceeded with the building of a more permanent structure at Niagara. A French report from Denonville, the governor of New France, of July 30th, 1687, reads in part:

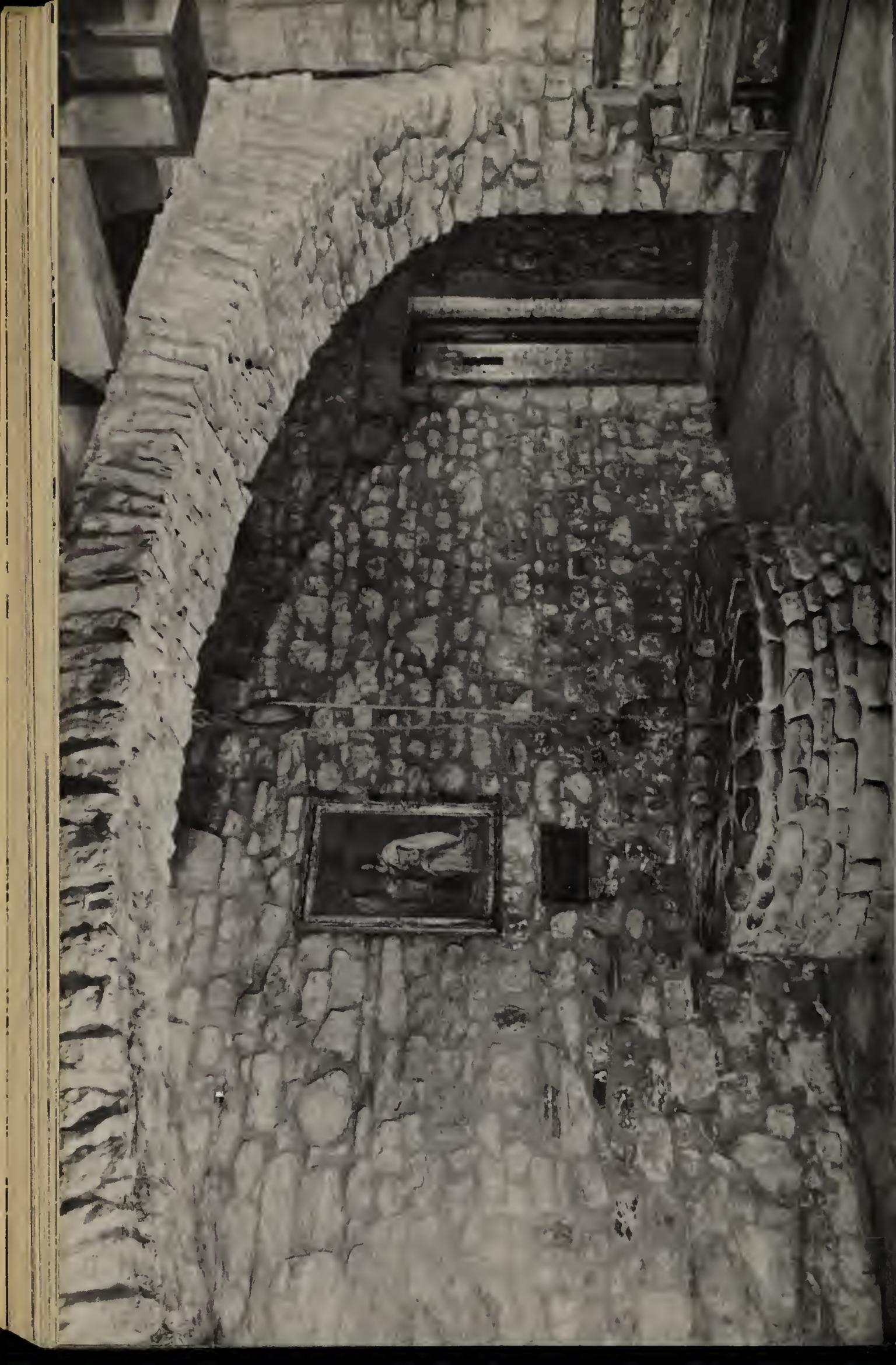
"The post I have fortified at Niagara is not a novelty since de La Salle had a house there which is in ruins since a year when it was abandoned by Sargeant LaFleur through intrigues between the Indians and English."

However, it seems this "house" was not a strongly fortified post, nor was it on the site of Fort Niagara, but probably more nearly where Lewiston now is. Therefore the "post I have fortified at Niagara" of Denonville was the first building at the mouth of the river and was actually the beginning of Fort Niagara.

This fort was built under difficulties because of continual "sniping" by the Indians. Any French who ventured into the forest for building material, or to hunt or fish were like enough to stay there — scalped! To quote a French record of the experience: "The wood choppers, one day, facing a storm, fell in the drifts just outside the gate; none durst go out to them. The second day the wolves found them and we saw it all."

Then too, their provisions were "foul and unsuited." A serious plague of sickness followed from which there was no relief, lasting through an entire winter of slow starvation and scurvy. By the following spring (1688) the garrison which had numbered over one hundred was reduced to a dozen half-starved men who evacuated the place. It was but a diplomatic gesture on the part of the French to appease the English demand for its discontinuance.

It was rebuilt by the French in 1725 at the mouth of the river. From their trading posts at Lewiston, built in 1720 to "prevent the English introducing themselves into the upper country" they



carefully maintained a "tacit control" over the entire area. The building of 1726 was made possible by a Frenchman by the name of deJoncaire, whose influence with the Senecas secured the permit to build a "store house" at the mouth of the river.

The "store house" was the most strongly constructed fortification the French had yet built. However, to secure permission to build, unmolested by the Indians, the French called it a "store house," for the building of a "fort" was not to be permitted.

Gaspard de Lery, the King's chief engineer in Canada, determined its precise location and superintended its construction. It was provided with exceptionally heavy walls four feet thick and heavy cross walls and arches, making possible the addition at a later date of upper stories from which heavy cannon could be fired. Beyond a doubt these ideas were embodied in the original plans. This building, called the "Castle," stands today and is by far the largest and most pretentious of the group of buildings at the post.

As late as 1757 the French held all the important frontier forts from Louisburg to Quebec, as well as Montreal, Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Frontenac (Kingston), (the English fort at Oswego they had destroyed), Niagara, Detroit, and as far west as Mackinaw, forming a comprehensive line of fortifications which, if successfully held, quite effectually shut off any hope the English might have of trade or conquest to the north or west. Fort Niagara was strengthened by guns the French had captured at Oswego and at Fort Pitt on the Monongahela River. This encirclement made it appear that the French intended to reach southward and encompass the English settlements.

The French and English war was the result. Contrary to French plans, Louisburg, Duquesne and Frontenac fell to the English in 1758, followed the next year by Quebec, Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and Niagara. Another year, 1760, and Montreal surrendered, and with it the other less important and more distant French outposts at Presque Isle, Detroit, and Mackinaw, leaving England in undisputed possession with the signing of the treaty at Paris in 1763.

CORPS & GARDE
GUARD ROOM



Sir William Johnson captured Niagara with a combined English-Colonial-Indian army composed of some 5000 regulars and provincials and about a thousand Indians. The English General Prideaux, originally in charge of the expedition, was mortally wounded early in the battle by the premature explosion of one of the English cannon, and Sir William took command.

The fort was in charge of Captain Pouchot who reported the condition of the garrison at the time as "400 men greatly fatigued and reduced, no more than 150 muskets fit for service, 109 men killed or wounded, the heavy cannon ball all spent and the defense works irreparably injured."

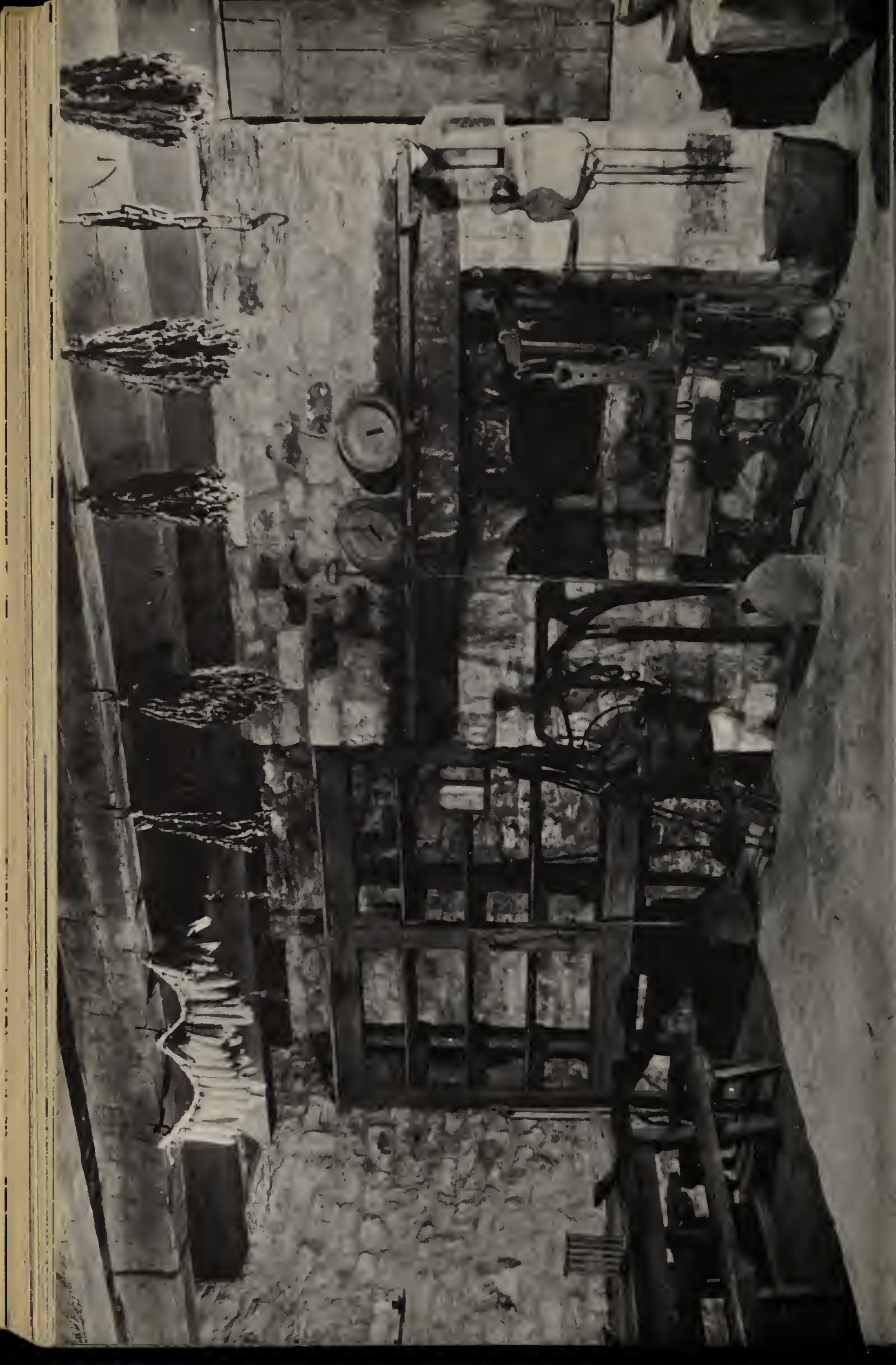
The surrender was accomplished with the understanding that the garrison should be protected from the Indians, of whom they stood in the greatest terror, fearing a re-enactment of the frightful scenes at Fort William Henry at the Battle of Lake George. Johnson's personal control over the Indians did accomplish this, preventing further bloodshed. He writes in his report, following the surrender:

"The garrison of Niagara surrendered on August 25th at 7 A.M. The number consisted of 607 men, 11 officers, besides a number of women and children. I divided among the several nations the plunder and scalps amounting to 246, of which 96 were prisoners. The officers, I, with difficulty released from them by ransom, good words, etc. Buried Brigadier General Prideaux in the Chapel and with a great deal of form. I was chief mourner."

The site of the Chapel was about the center of the present parade grounds. The exact location of the grave has never been determined. Johnson also reports his own losses at 60 killed, 180 wounded, besides 3 Indians killed and 5 wounded.

Fort Niagara was contested from the first period of settlement and had many changes of ownership. These have been tabulated as follows:

Indian	Ownership	1651-1669
Indian	Ownership (some French present)	1669-1725
Indian	Ownership (French occupation)....	1725-1759



Indian	Ownership (English occupation)....	1759-1764
English	Ownership	1764-1783
American	Ownership	
	(holdover interval and occupation)	1783-1796
American	Ownership	1796-

The most remarkable building surviving is the "Castle." Much had been done to put it in its original condition, inside and out, for through the years changes were made to adapt the building to the various purposes to which it has since been put. But these were mostly superficial and within its walls, leaving the exterior almost intact.

The stone used in building was quarried along the line of escarpment near Lewiston. The cut stone was shipped from the quarries at Frontenac (Kingston) while the iron work came largely from Montreal or Quebec.

In the Castle is the old well dug to insure a safe supply of water in the event the garrison was confined to this building by an attacking force. Also on the main floor are a large kitchen and a "council room," named in honor of Sir William Johnson, who held several important conferences here. This is a room of excellent proportions with large fireplaces at opposite ends. Adjacent to the council room is a room totally without light, which was used as a dungeon. A door opens into it from a narrow passage just outside the council room. The trading room is also located on the main floor, just to the right of the very massive front door. It is just here, inside the front door, that the well is located.

On the second floor are officers' quarters and two other larger rooms with a replica of a "bunk" extending the length of the room, without individual partitions, in which slept a garrison of soldiers, side by side, after the fashion of sardines in a can! The Jesuit Chapel is another interesting room, reconstructed after a close study of chapels of this period in New France. Great care has been used in the work of restoration and in the furnishings, such as chairs, tables, bunks, guns, hangings, paintings, etc.; all have been chosen and placed with excellent taste.

The other buildings within the walls, as well as the walls themselves, the wattled earthworks and stockades with their



sharpened pickets, the underground passages and prison cells, the antique lanterns, the powder magazine, the hot shot oven, the bake house, the blockhouse, the reproduction of the old French cross, planted in 1688 by Father Jean Millet following that terrible winter of plague and starvation, are all of deep interest.

In the center of the parade ground fly the national emblems of the three nations whose armies shed their blood in the assault or defense of this place, the key to the rich trade territory of the West. These three flags are the "starred and barred" Continental flag of 1776, the British Jack of 1759, and France's Fleur-de-lis of the same year. There is also a monument commemorating the Rush-Bagot Treaty of 1817, perhaps as short a treaty as ever was written, establishing a limitation of naval armaments on the Great Lakes. It made possible the unfortified boundary between the United States and Canada. Not a fort across the three thousand miles of frontier!

Following the capture of the fort by Sir William Johnson, it remained in England's hands throughout the Revolution and became for them a stronghold of no mean importance. It was the starting place of the St. Leger-Sir John Johnson attack on Fort Stanwix, and was their refuge following their defeat. From that time forward, throughout the entire period of the war, it served as the base of operations against the Mohawk Valley. Its history is studded with such names as that of Sir William Johnson, Colonel John Butler, Walter Butler, the Claus family, Joseph Brant the Chief of the Mohawk Indians, Molly Brant his sister and consort of Sir William Johnson, Catherine Montour the infamous Indian squaw whose merciless butchery at the massacre of the Wyoming Valley is an unmatched feminine atrocity, and many others whose names were familiar in the Mohawk and Cherry Valley settlements. Mrs. Campbell of Cherry Valley was brought here a captive from the massacre of that unhappy place, as were most of the prisoners taken in these raids.

With Catherine Montour scudding before the whirlwind advance of the Clinton-Sullivan expedition were populations of entire Indian villages, to a total exceeding five thousand persons, all seeking the protection and provisions of the English. Another



winter of starvation, disease and death ensued. The military graveyard reaped its last great harvest of burials, for after 1812 the cemetery was no longer used. It was found that whenever a new grave was dug a previous burial was encountered, yet no stone was there to mark the spot. It is thus little more than a hallowed "boneyard" of French, English, Colonial, and perhaps Indian remains.

Another writer has said of the old "Post":

"This old fort is as much noted for its enormity of crime as for any good ever derived from it by the nation in occupation. During the Revolution it was the Headquarters of all that was barbarous, unrelenting and cruel. There were congregated the leaders and chiefs of those bands of murderers and miscreants that carried death and destruction to the remote American settlements. There, civilized Europe revelled with savage America, and ladies of education and refinement mingled in the society of those whose only distinction was to wield the bloody tomahawk and scalping knife.

There, the squaws of the forest were raised to eminence and the most unholy unions between them and the officers of the highest rank were smiled upon and countenanced.

There, in their stronghold, like a nest of vultures, securely, for seven years, they sallied forth and preyed upon the distant settlements of the Mohawks and the Susquehannas. It was the depot of their plunder. There they planned their forays, and there they returned to feast, until the hour of action came again."

In 1777 the English constructed barracks across the river in Canada at the village now known as Niagara-on-the-Lake. Here Butler's Rangers were quartered. A mile from the village is Colonel John Butler's farm and on it a family cemetery in which he and others of the name are buried as well as many of the Rangers. Here also is the family vault of the Claus family where the widow of Daniel — nee Ann Johnson of Fort Johnson on the Mohawk, lies. The entire cemetery had lain abandoned for years, fences down and open to the farm livestock, but recently

the Dominion Government took possession and restored it. This bit of ground, together with old St. Marks, are of great interest to innumerable historians and tourists.

Old St. Marks was built in 1792 in the village; someone said of it: "This is a piece of old England — do not allow it to be altered."

Among the records of the church is the following entry: "May 15th (1796) Colonel John Butler of the Rangers buried (my patron)." On the wall of the church is a tablet commemorating his services.

* * * * *

IN CONCLUSION

These old homes, forts and battlefields serve to link us closer to our national foundations than any other inheritance. As a voice from the past they bespeak a simple, toilsome and hazardous existence, supported by a neighborly, communal and religious sentiment. Those who know these structures intimately have heard their message and felt the sustaining influence of their weight of years. Happily, within their sturdy doors or along the flashing streams or deep in the shady woods through the length and breadth of the Valley, where once the destiny of a Nation hung in the balance, their message is still to be heard by the visitor who cares to come and listen.

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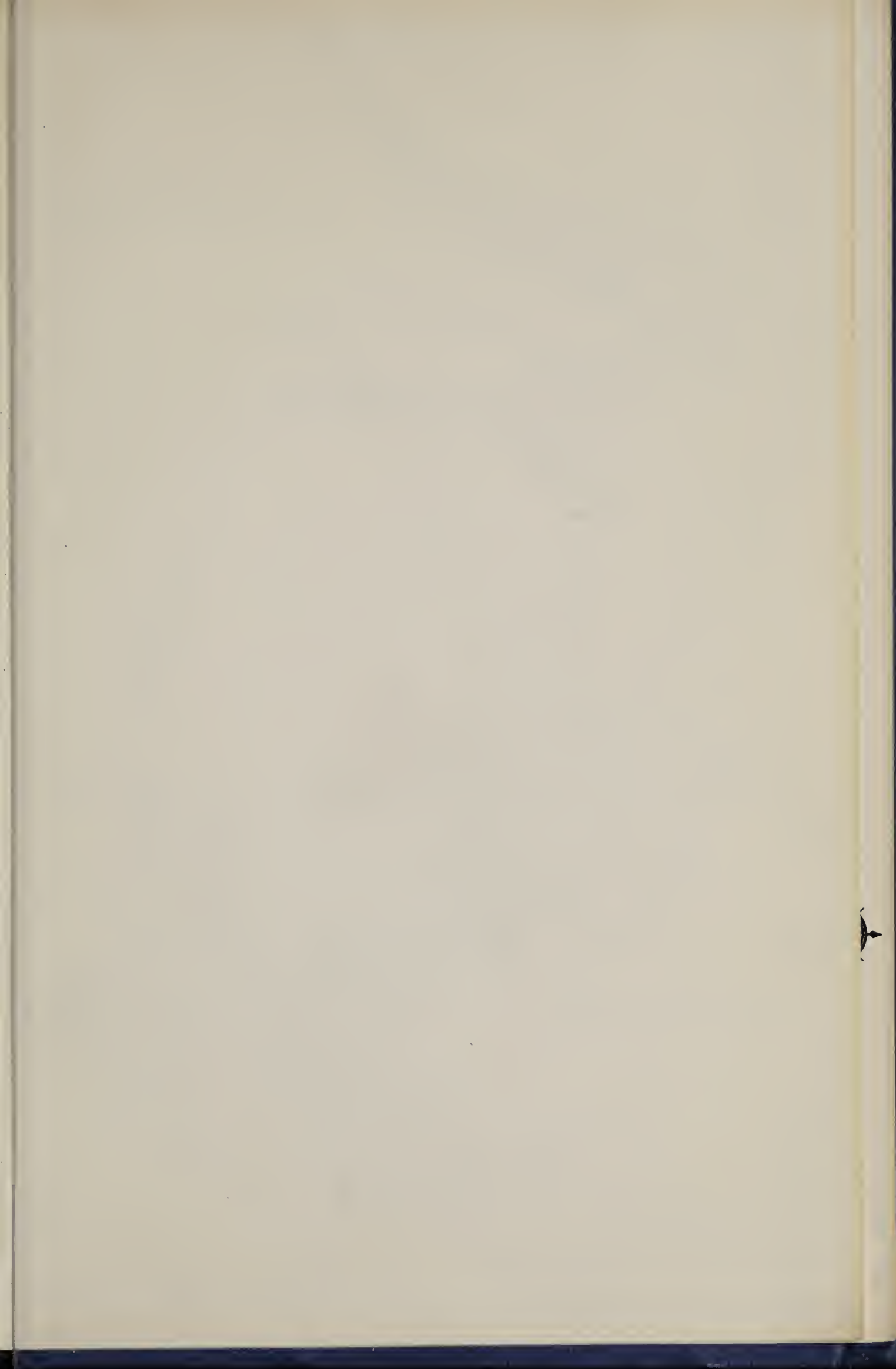
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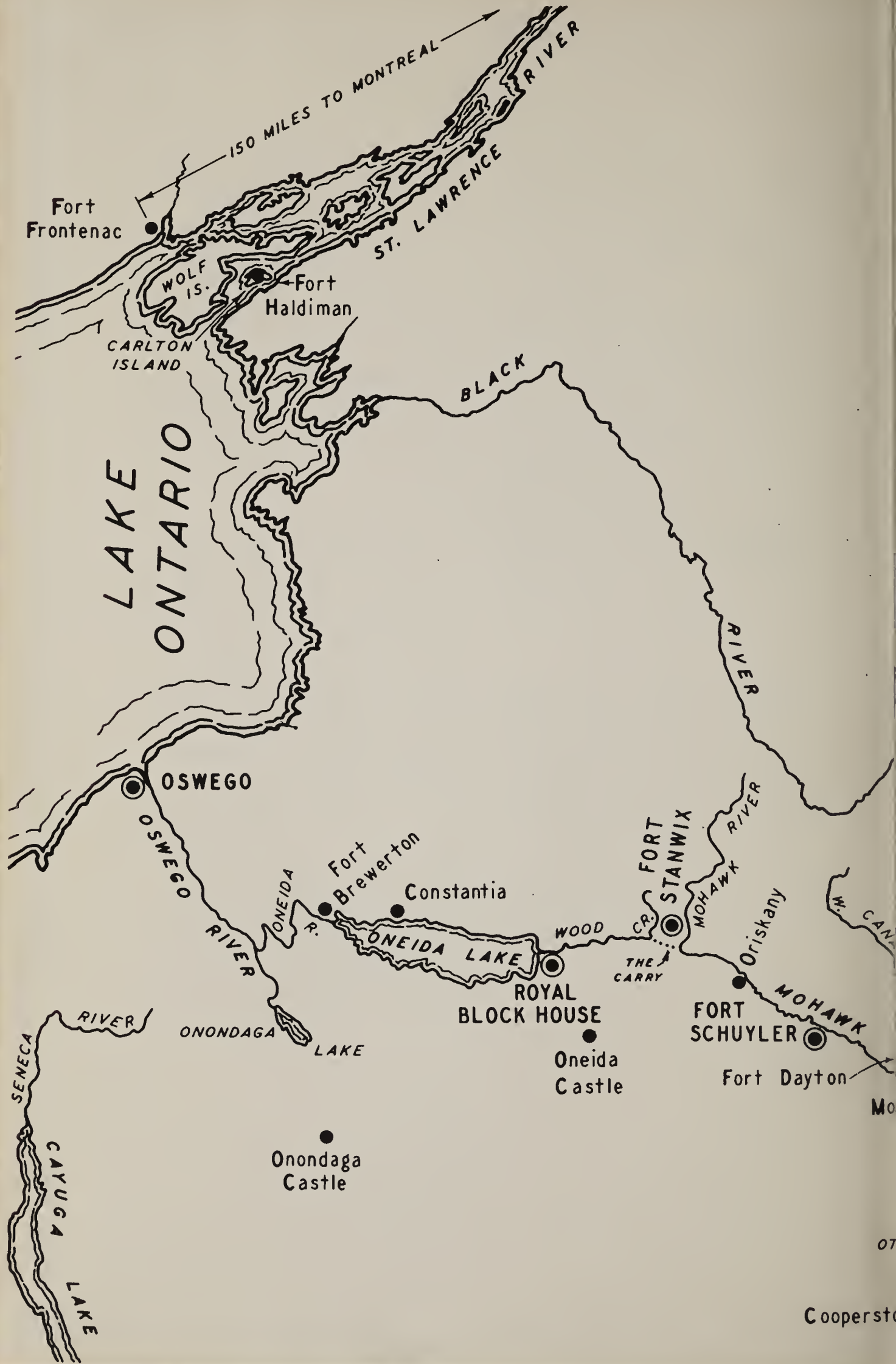
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MAP OF MOHAWK COUNTRY

FROM
1690 TO 1790

